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TEST FOR THE UNITED NATIONS

Battle news is good; wonderfully good. So good as to be dangerous for our sense of realities and of collective loyalties? The series of progressive successes achieved by our Allies on the Eastern Front has bettered highest expectation. Their third, culminating stroke across the Upper Don against the northern flank of Hitler's great Voronezh-Stalingrad-Rostov salient has already had far-reaching effects. It has routed and put virtually out of action the Hungarian group of divisions, thereby completing the disintegration of all the satellite contingents in Russia; it has opened an important line of rail communications through Svoboda to the front; and it has enabled the Russian forces farther south to resume their advance. Wheeling south-west, these forces have stormed Millerovo and swept across the Donetz north of Rostov, "pinching" the Germans into a new salient within the Donetz Bend. The threat to the communications of the German army group in the Caucasus is in consequence greatly increased; for the bottle-neck at Rostov is now menaced from the north as well as by the Russian columns advancing astride the Lower Don. Their rearguards pressed hard by the Russians, the German divisions in the central Caucasus are retreating fast, with the additional spur of fear lest an unchecked Russian advance down the Stalingrad-Krasnodar railway may cut their line of retreat. In short, Germany's entire territorial gains last summer on the Eastern Front are crumbling: a million men will have been lost, the wretched satellites bled white, and a doomed army of twenty German divisions left to perish in encirclement outside Stalingrad, all for nothing. Small wonder that General Dittmar's broadcast to Germany this week should once again have emphasised the man-power difficulties confronting the High Command, particularly since the relief of Leningrad threatens to create yet another active sector of operations, another call on Germany's already stretched reserves.

Reactions in this country and, not less, in the United States to this succession of resounding Russian victories contain elements of latent danger. Conceivably (though, we hope, remotely) there is a risk lest reactionary interests, alarmed by popular enthusiasm for the Russian armies and by the disquieting possibility of the U.S.S.R. winning the war "on its own," may work covertly for a reduction in the future rate of Lease-Lend and British shipments to this embarrassingly successful Ally. More immediate and real is the danger of wishful thinking and complacency infecting British and American opinion in Washington and Whitehall, Detroit and Coventry, alike. Since Germany, the headlines assure us, is reeling to defeat, why sweat to the last ounce of effort in tank or aircraft factory, why steel nerves in Cabinet to the grim resolution required to launch early invasion against the Continent? Why not let the Russians first carry on the "softening" process further? The suggestion is insidious. It is the more important that a sense of realism should be retained and that we should keep certain cardinal factors firmly in mind. First, that on a front in which they have actively engaged nearly a hundred Axis divisions the Russians are inevitably paying for their victories a heavy price in men and material; they are entitled to expect not less but more help from us in 1943. Secondly, that time is not necessarily on our side: shipping losses which would so hamper the Allies that Germany might find time to consolidate a less ambitious *Grossraum* represent real chinks in Allied armour. Thirdly, that Anglo-American operations on land have so far done little, and give no immediate promise of doing more, to assist the U.S.S.R. to make this year's campaigns decisive; and Germany is still far from being beaten. True, General Montgomery is now pushing on to Tripoli, while General Eisenhower would presumably claim that he has compelled the enemy to divert to Tunisia a considerable air force and several divisions of troops. Nevertheless, though nearly three months have passed since the Allied landed in Algeria, very much remains to be done before we can look confidently for the fall of Bizerta and the opening of Sicilian waters to Allied convoys. Not merely, indeed, is the "under-belly" of the Axis still far from being exposed; a further question has still to be faced. Can French North Africa, without important political changes, even if cleared of enemy troops, be regarded as a satisfactory base for a Continental expeditionary force? If not, the presence of Allied armies in North Africa is strategically meaningless.

It would be self-deception to pretend that the North Africa over which Vichy's Imperial Council presides affords the security against espionage, sabotage or other treachery which is vital to a military base. Leave out of account the disastrous extent to which the Allied cause has been morally compromised by the deal with Darlanism; in the scales of pure "expediency" we must weigh the practical considerations that, until solid ground can be found in the quicksands of North African politics, large American forces must remain immobilised as a politely camouflaged garrison, while the enlarged French army which is to be raised and equipped must constitute, for all General Giraud's personal integrity, a potential Frankenstein. With all political comment from correspondents on the spot still blanketed by censorship, it is difficult to discern any recent improvement, unless we are to hail as betterment the appointment of the sinister M. Peyrouton as Governor of Algeria, in a situation as static as it is unsatisfactory. Both Mr. Macmillan locally and Mr. Attlee in Parliament have expressed pious hopes of a Giraud—de Gaulle *rapprochement*, and Mr. Macmillan has spoken frankly of the need for a thorough political "house-cleaning" and the early establishment of an acceptable Provisional Government. Yet General de Gaulle remains in his London tent; General Giraud declares that he is preoccupied exclusively by the task of organising a French army; authoritarian Vichy rule in North Africa continues to preserve a semblance of outward order while its Gestapo maltreats Socialists, Jews and de Gaullists, and more news seems likely to be made any day by the gun-men of this or that conspiracy. What is the solution to be? The answer is not easy. As Pierre Maillaud has pointed out in an incisive analysis published last week by the *News Chronicle*, French North Africa holds none of the elements—proletarian or liberal *petit bourgeois*—which upheld republican democracy in metropolitan France. An essentially "colonial" white population exposed for years to propaganda from agents of Hitler, Franco, Mussolini, anti-Semite royalists, Colonel de la Rocque and finally Doriot and Déat, would be as likely to elect a democratic administration as would the pre-1941 colonists in, say, Malaya if they had been exposed to comparable influences. In Algeria, even our de Gaullist friends are by no means synonymous with democrats.

This being so, we had better face the facts that democracy cannot be forcibly implanted by Anglo-American bayonets in a soil from which only the influence of metropolitan France itself—once finally liberated—can extirpate Fascist tendencies. Equally we can neither put de Gaullism in absolute power under the guns of Allied battleships nor afford the obloquy and almost universal local obstruction which we should incur if we sent the Imperial Council and its president, General Giraud, packing and installed General Eisenhower as military governor representing an Anglo-American "occupation." A substantial measure of local French consent must be obtained if any administration is to work quickly; and speed is the essence of victory.

It appears to us that the one practicable solution at present in sight is that French North Africa should be placed, in trust for France, under a Consortium on which the leading powers of the United Nations—the U.S.S.R., the U.S.A. and Britain—would all be represented, together with Generals Giraud and de Gaulle. Such a Consortium, given the (absolutely necessary) inclusion of Russia, would not give rise to charges of Anglo-American imperialism humiliating to Frenchmen; its *raison d'être* would be to defeat the enemy, not to further this or that political faction; under its authority a reliable and impartial civil administration could be built by a process of purge and selection. Such a plan is not free from difficulties, and it presupposes (reasonably, we hope) the willingness of Generals Giraud and de Gaulle to co-operate. It also implies—possibly a larger proviso—a greater measure of political collaboration for common purposes than we have yet seen between the Governments of the Anglo-American democracies and the U.S.S.R. In fact, the problem of French North Africa—failing whose early solution we shall be prejudicing military operations, delaying victory and requiting ill the disproportionate contribution made by Russia to the anti-Fascist cause—is a crucial test of the unity of the United Nations.

The Bye-elections

This bye-election business, with its multiplication of freak candidates, is getting past a joke. Probably one reason for the exceptional number of persons who are taking it into their heads just now to present their claims to the electors is the improvement in the military situation, which has the double effect of making most people less inclined to criticise the Government, and of making those who do continue to criticise it readier to push their criticisms further. It seems clear that elections in which the nominee of the party machine which claims the seat has pitted against him a whole array of opponents of different shades can afford no real test of the state of public opinion. The plain truth is that there is no effective rallying point for the forces of criticism; Commonwealth has not succeeded in establishing any natural leadership of these forces, and there is no other group which is even attempting to do this on a national scale. Such issues as that of war production, which loomed large a little while ago, have receded right into the background now that the process of industrial mobilisation is practically complete; and the issues of peace aims and reconstruction policy have not yet reached the point at which they can be expressed in such a form as to appeal at all readily to the general body of electors, especially in the present state of the electoral roll. Quite soon, this situation may change—as a result perhaps of a refusal by the Government to pledge itself to acceptance of the Beveridge Report. We can imagine Social Security candidates making an excellent showing under such conditions. The Government is therefore lucky in its chance of getting the present large crop of bye-elections out of the way before the Beveridge issue has ripened enough to become an important factor. The Conservative Central Office's attitude to the Beveridge Report, as recorded in the last issue of its official journal, makes it seem highly probable that the Conservatives in the Government will do their best to prevent any early translation of Social Security into accepted Government policy. If they succeed, the effect on the home electoral situation may well be very great.

The Strike Threat on the Railway

The Locomotive Engineers' case raises a difficult problem from the standpoint of legality. The Union has now reported to Mr. Bevin that a dispute exists, and has coupled with this intimation a threat to strike unless the Government intervenes. Normally such a procedure would be within the law; for the wartime prohibition on strike action lapses if the Minister of Labour fails to refer any dispute thus reported to an arbitration tribunal within the required time. The complicating factor in this case is that the dispute has already been arbitrated upon, though not by the National Arbitration Tribunal, to which the Locomotive Engineers now apparently wish it to be referred. The body which has already pronounced judgment is the special Railway Wage Tribunal, over which Sir John Foster presides. The legal question is whether the reference to this tribunal counts as a reference under the emergency regulations or not. If it does, Mr. Bevin has personally no power to refer the matter to a second tribunal. If it does not, he perhaps has this power. What he will do remains unknown as we write; but we find it difficult to believe, whatever course he may adopt, that a strike is really likely to occur. The Locomotive Engineers may have a legitimate grievance; but strike action under present conditions is assuredly not the right way of getting it remedied. We hope that the Trades Union Congress General Council, to which the Union has duly reported the affair, will take a hand and bring pressure to avert a stoppage. Part of the trouble, of course, is that the Union actually stood pledged by its leaders to accept the award of Sir John Foster's Tribunal. In these circumstances it is somewhat ominous that a resolution in favour of immediate strike action was but narrowly defeated at the Union's delegate conference last week.

Actors' Disunity

The actors had a stormy meeting about Sunday opening of theatres. If the proposal really involved, as some of the opponents suggested, a danger that actors, stage-hands and other theatrical employees would be called upon to work a seven-day week, the case against making the change would be very strong; but it is certain that, did this danger really exist, the proposal would never have been brought forward with the united support of the councils of the various associations concerned. The problem of the seven-day week has already been dealt with in the case of other entertainment agencies which already open on Sundays, as well as in many other industries in which work on Sundays is required. The opponents of Sunday opening argued that it was not fair to ask them to forfeit their Sundays at home; but to this the pertinent reply was that plenty of other people concerned with the war effort are called upon to work on Sundays, and why should not the actors do likewise in order to entertain sections of the community which find difficulty in getting to a theatre on any other day. Of course, in addition to this self-interested objection there is the Sabbatarian objection, which is really at the back of the resistance. If it were not for this hard-core objection in principle, the rest of the opposition would soon be overcome. It is astonishing how strongly the tradition of the Puritan Sunday persists, despite the general weakening of the hold of religion on the main body of the community. Under war conditions, this particular manifestation of the Evangelical conscience becomes an exceptional nuisance; and we hope the referendum which is now to be taken by the actors will have the same result as that which have been taken already by the variety artistes—who showed themselves by an overwhelming majority in favour of wartime Sunday opening.

The Need for an Opposition (*by a Parliamentary Correspondent*)

Only a few weeks ago the House of Commons stood in silence to register their horror at the story of Hitler's latest massacres. Since then the Government has been asked repeatedly what in fact it intends to do to save Jews, especially Jewish children, who might escape if the restrictions were relaxed at the ports in Palestine, Britain and other countries. The Government's reply amounted to no more than that Britain could do nothing by herself and that confidential discussions were now in progress with other governments on the subject. That may mean much or little. It was all that could be expected in a House of Commons where there is at present no national figure on the Opposition benches. One thinks, without going back to the days of Gladstone, how great a moral issue would have been made of this point by almost any former Opposition leader. An Asquith, a Lansbury, even a Baldwin would have compelled the public to see this question as one of simple human decency.

For the same reason Sir James Grigg had far too easy a time of it when he made his astonishingly lame reply about the withdrawal of the A.B.C.A. pamphlet on the Beveridge Report. To one who has seen the House of Commons in happier times it seemed extraordinary that the Labour Party did not act as a united body on this issue. What was Mr. Greenwood doing? He appointed Sir William Beveridge; he must know that it is essential for the progressive cause and especially for the Labour Party to defeat Sir James, behind whom in this matter stand Lord Croft, Sir Kingsley Wood and Conservative Central Office. Bowles, Dugdale and Shinwell pressed their pointed questions, and I am assured that the matter will not be allowed to rest. Listowel is raising the matter in the Lords and I hear that John Dugdale has it down for the adjournment on Tuesday week. I hope, too, to hear that the Labour Party is taking it up as a party. Many Liberals and some Conservatives would support it and create the sort of protest which the Government could not ignore. No one could suggest that such a protest would endanger national unity on the war; it must be obvious to everyone that this is a case in which the Tories are making use of the Labour Party's docility for their own party purposes. I am told from many units only about half these A.B.C.A. pamphlets have been returned and that both officers and men resented the withdrawal of the pamphlet.

On Tuesday a group of Conservatives made a lively issue of the absurdity of legislation by unintelligible Orders in Council. Admittedly much legislation in these days must be by administrative action, silently sanctioned by Parliament, but that is all the more reason for insisting that it should be shaped in terms that the layman can understand and that Parliament can challenge when it sees fit.

On Wednesday Mr. Eden was obviously embarrassed by a question about the appointment of Peyrouton, who is known to have been a peculiarly vicious enemy of progress in Tunis, where, before the war, he took the place of a Popular Front Commissioner, who had done something to reconcile the Arab population. Since then Peyrouton's reputation has gone from bad to worse. One other curious and significant incident. Has Tory feeling really reached the stage of seriously opposing the appointment of a Labour man (Major Milner) as deputy-Chairman of Ways and Means?

BOMBING AND POLICY

THIS week German aircraft killed a number of children in London; a few more people were hurt by falling shrapnel; a few buildings were destroyed. Dr. Goebbels was able to say that the British attack on Berlin was avenged. This, from Hitler's point of view, closed the credit side of the raids; the debit account was heavier. The raids reminded Londoners that the war is still a stern affair which closely concerns them, as well as the Russians and the American and British soldiers in Africa. In London, many Americans who had not before seen a raid were knit more intimately with Britishers to whom the blitz is an old story. Both were impressed and reassured by the strength of the defences which destroyed a score of German planes. From the military point of view, Hitler could have thought of no action more likely to close the ranks and toughen the morale of his enemies.

What of the British attack on Berlin? No doubt it gratified a considerable body of British and American opinion, just as the German raids on Britain pleased many Germans. But that is not a justification that need detain us. The important question is whether it hastened the end of the war. It was certainly more effective than the German raid on London. It did great damage, and, like other severe raids over the Rhineland, must have done something to slow up production and interfere with communications. If this were a war of attrition, the accumulation of such blows would be of importance. The ill-effects in toughening German morale, which is the natural result of civilian bombing, are probably in this case offset to some degree by the realisation among the German public that British and American raids may grow more severe as Allied production waxes and the strength of the Luftwaffe wanes. In fact it would be fair to sum up the advantages of bombing Germany by saying that it is to be judged as part of the long-term policy of blockade. Battleships and submarines prevent supplies reaching Germany; bombing operations destroy the dwindling supply of consumers' goods. Furniture and food destroyed in Britain in 1940 could be replaced; Germany has no America from which to import and no chance of converting war factories back again to consumer production. Add all these advantages of bombing together and they suggest that if the war with Germany is to last several more years, bombing may be one of many factors in bringing about a German collapse.

Contrast this rational view of bombing with the misleading impression that proceeds from ignorant enthusiasm and excited propaganda. Note that these arguments apply only to a long war, whereas ever since the German attack on Russia, the real issue has been how soon we could prepare an effective second front. From this point of view it is at least doubtful whether the concentration on the production of four-engine bombers has been justified when we consider the other essentials for a serious offensive that have been starved as a result. The notion that Germans would suddenly collapse because they were bombed, whereas British morale would be toughened by the same process, has been one of those mystical illusions which beset otherwise sane people in time of war. To be useful from the point of view of political warfare, bombing must not be occasional and indiscriminate, but part of a carefully planned propaganda which includes promises as well as threats. On this basis the actual bombing policy of this country in the last twelve months seems incapable of rational analysis. The most furious threats were offered by the Prime Minister and by the chief of Bomber Command of a continuous series of thousand-bomber raids over German towns. All Germany was to be flattened to the earth. For technical reasons these threats could not be fulfilled; their chief military result was to keep bombers in Britain which were urgently needed in the Middle East. When at length, after the disaster of Tobruk, the policy of concentrating bombers in England was abandoned, their arrival in Egypt was quickly followed by Britain's spectacular triumph over Rommel. The proper use of the aeroplane in war was once again shown to be as part of combined operations.

The same apparently irrational policy has been adopted towards Italy. Military raids of obvious importance were very properly carried out on Turin and Genoa. That was part of the African offensive, but the same calculation could not justify declarations by British spokesmen that any and every Italian town would be continuously and ruthlessly bombed. Against the advantage of some confusion due to Mussolini's decision to evacuate some of the inhabitants of some Italian towns must once again be set the heartening effect of ill-considered threats on the Italian people. Nobody but a candidate for a madhouse would actually want to bomb Rome, Florence, Assisi and Ravenna. No military object would be served by destroying these towns which happen, incidentally, to be the very centre of our cultural inheritance. To reduce them to ashes would not rebuild the architectural loveliness of Bath or the unique value of the Temple. Added to which, the blindest opponents of the Roman Catholic Church could see the harm to the Allied cause which the bombing of the Eternal City would do throughout the world, and it would destroy at a stroke our most effective propaganda to Italy, which is quite ready to-day to regard us protectors of culture against German barbarism.

The mass of Italians have never wanted to fight this war; indeed they have shown on many occasions an urgent desire to be quit of it. To-day, with the German forces stretched on the Russian front, with her occupying armies busy with a score of revolts in Europe, an Italian rising against the Germans becomes a possibility. Hitler can no longer afford an occupying force to hold down Italians. Threats of the withdrawal of food, which Germany now controls on the Alpine routes, are no doubt powerful, but they could be counteracted by the assurance that a separate peace would at once bring to Italy greater supplies of food than they have had in the past. A tentative effort to gather an Italian legion under Count Sforza has been made in the United States, but no clear demonstration has been given to the Italians or to the world that anti-Fascist Italians are to be offered the chance of rebuilding their country. Instead of that we have talked absurdly of a long list of Royalties and other Important Personages who might take the place of Mussolini, and we have uttered threats that have had no effect except to make us sound like impotent barbarians. And the results in Italy must have been very similar to the result of the German failure in England in 1940. The waverers are heartened by finding that the enemy is less terrible than they supposed, and the fighters are encouraged by the belief that if they continue victory will still be theirs. It takes the diplomacy of the British High Command to create a Dunkirk spirit in Italy.

One of the misfortunes of war is that it brings to the surface people whose political intelligence would before the war have made them the centre of no larger audience than that which collects in the private bar of the village public-house. They grimace before the public like the figures of fun who used to compete for the prize of folly in medieval carnivals. A man may have intelligence, we do not doubt, and yet, like one of the candidates in Bristol Central, declare himself, President of the Society of Angelic Revelation; this description of his faith does not in itself qualify him to sit in Parliament. Again, a candidate may hate the Scarlet Woman with the fervour of John Knox, but if he stands for Parliament and states his readiness to withdraw if the Premier promises to bomb Rome, he forfeits his claim to be taken seriously as a political thinker. Political aberrations of this sort have a new importance to-day. We cannot this time afford a Pemberton-Billing period. We approach a point in the war when millions of lives may depend on whether we keep our heads and prove ourselves capable of fighting the same war at the same time as our Allies. It may really be that on the Eastern front Germany's power is cracking and that Hitler's capacity to organise the defence of Europe, west of Russia, depends on the speed with which Britain and America can begin their long-promised offensive. The Russians have lost many millions of men in this war; they are interested in ending it swiftly, not in a long-term policy of blockade. Therefore the bombing of German towns will not seem to them important; they regard bombing, not as a special operation, but as the means by which, on the eve of an offensive, bridges and communications are destroyed, the movements of troops impeded and the way paved for the advance of the invader.

In a word, they think not in terms of bombing duels and victory by blockade, but of the swift defeat of the German army, which, given sane political warfare and concerted strategy, may conceivably be achieved in 1943.

FAMINE IN INDIA

THE British Government is facing in India an enemy more formidable than Congress. "Acute famine" is the term which the semi-official newsagency now uses to describe the food shortage in the Bombay Presidency. It is not confined to that province. Delhi has no wheat and Calcutta little rice. Everywhere the women have to stand in long queues. Prices have soared, it is said, by as much as 180 per cent. Letters arriving after long delays in England mention even more fantastic increases than this in the cost of living. Rice, the staple food, is said to cost about 1s. a pound in Bombay instead of the usual 1d. or 1½d., while potatoes are quoted at 9d. a pound. These are prices which would break us: they mean death by hunger to the Indian masses. Not even in India will men meet starvation with the passive tactics of non-violent non-resistance. Food riots are becoming common. At Nasik, in the Bombay Presidency, the other day, the angry crowds were so formidable that the armed police had to call in the troops. The policy seems to be to rely on ruthless severity, for a general order has been given to the troops to fire without warning. That is an impolitic cruelty which Mr. Amery will have to justify to Parliament, if it fulfils its duty.

Nature is often a step-mother to men and animals in India. In this instance she is not to blame. This is a man-made famine. Several explanations are offered. In normal times India imports some rice from Burma, chiefly for the needs of Madras. That the Japanese have stopped. Again, Indian wheat has been exported to feed the army in the Middle East, to Ceylon and also to Persia. After the shortage began, the Punjab forbade the export of its wheat surplus to provinces suffering from a deficiency. Finally, it is said that the failure of transport is to blame. We are not sure what that means; perhaps the excessive demands of the army, possibly sabotage. These explanations would account for shortage, but not famine. The quantity of rice imported was never great. It was wrong and even criminal to export wheat in these conditions. But the poor in India do not eat wheat, save at festivals. The

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poor peasant sells wheat to the village usurer and buys in exchange for it *gram*—a rather unappetising pulse, also used as fodder. Nor does the explanation of deficient transport impress us. In normal times most villages are self-sufficient or nearly so, and they rely on bullock-carts for such transport as they must use. No, the clue to this famine lies in a word to be found occasionally in the leading articles of Indian newspapers. The peasants are hoarding food and so, doubtless, are the dealers and usurers. This is in wartime the immemorial practice of the East. It is the gravest problem the Chinese Government has to face, and in China also it has brought about a fantastic rise in the cost of living. Indians, presumably, took to it when they had reason to fear a Japanese invasion. Many feared starvation; a few saw the chance of swollen profits from the shortage. The peasant who has a surplus of rice or *gram* or *dahl* refuses to sell it. Presently, the towns are starving and eventually that is the case also of the less provident peasants, the landless labourers, and the wretches who have only a dwarf holding of an acre or two. In recent decades this rural proletariat has been growing rapidly, by the decay of the peasant-owners and tenants. These people hoard under the pressure of fear. The dealers and usurers do it for gain.

Faced with this situation the Bureaucracy, until the other day, did nothing, though the shortage has been growing for at least six months. It has a reputation for ability, because its members pass a stiff competitive examination. Like the rest of mankind it does very well what it believes in doing. It seldom fails in a policeman's job: it can preserve law and order. But when it comes to the welfare of the people, it has a stern and unbending faith in *laissez faire*, which is in the realm of theory the perfect expression of the indifference of the rich to the welfare of the poor, There have been and are to-day among the small body of British Civil Servants in India individuals who toil devotedly. It is also true that railways and roads and in a few places water-power have prevented the frequent famines of the past. But this is no great achievement for a bureaucracy that has lived through a century and a half among this half-starved, short-lived, impoverished and illiterate population. Sometimes it would have been better if it had done nothing. In one fit of activity it imposed landlords on these peasants to rack-rent them. In the present instance its plea was that it had no powers: food was a provincial question. That is rubbish. Six of the eleven provinces are under direct bureaucratic rule. The Viceroy can always over-rule a provincial governor and to-day he is armed with emergency powers, which authorise him to do what seems good to him. That his excuse was an evasion is evident from the fact that in the last week or two quite a lot has been done. Export has been stopped; wheat is being imported and provinces with a surplus have been ordered to let it go to their neighbours.

What more do we ask? If our diagnosis is correct, these measures, though useful, are inadequate: they will not stop hoarding. Indians ask for rationing. Certainly this should be done in the towns. But we cannot see it working in the villages. Rationing demands (1) a loyal and (2) a literate population, which (3) draws its supplies of food from a shop that can be watched. Indians are not loyal: few of them can read: they largely grow their own food. It is the minority, reckoned in scores of millions, which does not grow its own food, or not enough of it, which to-day is starving. The problem is to get at the hoarded food (*a*) in the stored jars of the peasants and (*b*) in the granaries of the dealers.

Our first suggestion is that coercion be applied not to the starving masses, but to the profiteers. If shooting there must be, why not start on a few usurers? The first thing to do is obviously to commandeer all stocks of food and put them on the market at a reasonable price—even below cost price. The peasant remains to be dealt with, who hoards because he is afraid. If in this island the people were suffering from lack of confidence, a wireless talk by Mr. Churchill would put heart into them. That will not work in India. Few of her villages boast even one wireless set, and her Churchills are in prison. A wireless talk by Lord Linlithgow would chill even loyal hearts. The only way to deal with the food problem in the village would be to appeal to its public opinion as a unit. When an Indian village does make up its mind about anything, it thinks and acts with astonishing unanimity. It would, if it really meant business, deal with a hoarder by outcasting him. But first of all, it has to be persuaded, reassured, and taught how to act. Bullets will not do that. The official machine is useless, for the police—with good reason—are hated. No white man could do it, and still less could a tame Indian. Only an Indian National Government could do it.

The problem, as we see it, is first one of distribution. But as several competent statisticians have demonstrated, if exports were stopped and all the food produced in India distributed with meticulous equality, it would not suffice to feed the people even on the far from generous scale adopted in Indian prisons. The usual reckoning is that the meagre, half-starved coolie, a shadow of a man who often weighs about seven stone, eats daily rather less than would suffice for one square meal. Luckily, perhaps, the term of his suffering is brief, for his expectation of life is only between 23 and 24 years. The second problem is, therefore, to increase production. The first thing to do, we should say, would be to set the tractors going, plough up the waste land, sow a good fodder crop like *berseem* and feed the emaciated and all but useless cattle, until they give a good yield of milk. That done, the next problem would be to ensure that it reached the village children instead of the usurer. But how will you even begin? There are no tractors to be had, and there is not in the whole of this peninsula one plant that can make an internal-combustion engine. The development of Indian agriculture may become after the war as exciting and creative an adventure as the beginning of cooperative farming in Russia fifteen years ago. But for the time being the urgent problem is one of relief, and relief itself may be so administered as to induce some of the political and personal conditions out of which may spring a solution of the deadlock.

A LONDON DIARY

THE point of the letter sent by members of the Brains Trust to the Programme Controller of the B.B.C. is, I gather, that questions on serious topics are to an increasing extent weeded out and never asked. They complain that the questions actually allowed to reach the Brains Trust are mainly trivial. One of the most important parts of their job was to show that big political and ethical issues can be treated in a popular and informative way. The letter was signed by Huxley, Leslie Howard, Kenneth Clark, Joad and Gilbert Murray. Mrs. Hamilton is in the United States and Commander Campbell, who pretends to no other function than that of a corner boy, naturally refused to sign. Malcolm Sargent wrote a separate letter agreeing with the substance of the complaint. Alfred Edwards, the Middlesbrough M.P., has also put down a House of Commons question on the matter. I suppose Mr. Bracken will have the job of answering; the real responsibility, of course, belongs to Conservative Central Office. What is Sir Kingsley Wood's function except to see that the British public is kept in a proper state of ignorance or delusion ready for the next general election?

* * *

Conservative Central Office is afraid that the British public may really want social change. They do not fear the great trade unions, which they hope to buy off by promises of a satisfactory share in the corporate state which is to be ours after the war. They do not fear the regular leaders of the Labour Party. The threat comes from the angry scepticism of the factories and Services. Hence the perturbation of Lord Croft and Conservative Headquarters when an ABCA pamphlet threatens to inform the army about the Beveridge Report. Hence the craven withdrawal of Sir James Grigg. Hence the constant pressure of the 1922 Committee to prevent serious questions being put before the Brains Trust. Joad and Huxley and their fellows may have annoyed most of us from time to time; some may dislike Joad's laugh or his type of religion; others regard Huxley as a materialist, and so on. But the relevant point is that almost for the first time millions of people, who are determined to have a share in the future of their country, have had the chance through the Brains Trust to listen to the kind of intelligent conversation which has in the past been the preserve of the educated classes. How dangerous if they knew the facts; if they hear the arguments; if they are informed about the great issues of social security, reconstruction and international politics! They could not then be relied upon to fall for the tricks which gave the same old gang victory in 1918 and which have maintained the substance of power for them ever since. Already Conservative Central Office is preparing an Inflation-Country-Can't-Stand-the-Cost argument with which to kill the Beveridge scheme. It worked in 1931; why not try it again?

* * *

List the qualities that have made great men of Lloyd George, Winston Churchill, Gandhi, Stalin and so on. Not at all a bad competition. Begin with Lloyd George on his eightieth birthday. First, a terrific capacity for work due at least in part to a chest measurement that would do credit to a champion boxer. Secondly, the most sensitive antennae ever granted to a public man. No actor was ever more intuitively aware of the currents of feeling that pass through his audience. To my mind the greatest and least easily analysed of L.G.'s gifts is his capacity to get up in the House of Commons and talk in a conversational tone that makes every individual present feel that L.G. is talking specially to him, on his own hearthrug. L.G. has been an orator and a wit, but the secret lies not in his public but in his private fascination. His art charms on the platform, in the group and in private. After that a host of qualities crowd together. Imagination and drive must go together in every great man. Most surprising is the fact that L.G. has never had a come-back in politics since 1922. The Geneva Conference was his last great appearance on the world stage; a friend who has been studying that conference tells me that L.G. aimed at nothing less than bringing Russia and Germany back into the concert of Europe on equal terms, reconstructing Europe's economic life and carrying through the kind of currency reform that we shall still have to accomplish after this war. He was opposed by Winston Churchill and Curzon; and defeated by Poincaré and Northcliffe. The results of failure were the assassination of Rathenau and the political assassination of Lloyd George. However, that and much other history has to be written, it will show that, however great his faults, L.G. is one of the few men of undoubted genius of our time.

* * *

In celebration of the birthday of Pastor Niemöller, the Archbishop of Canterbury preached on January 14th a memorable sermon. He pointed to the resistance that the Christian Church all over Europe is making to Nazi rule. This is natural since Nazi philosophy substitutes racial superiority for the equality of man, despises mercy and pity as decadent, and makes justice coincident with the interests of the State. Dr. Temple recalled that in Germany itself brave leaders of the church oppose Nazi oppression and Nazi doctrine. He added that none of them, seems so far to have protested against the international crimes of the Nazis. They left it to the Christians in Holland and France and other countries to protest against the present massacre of the Jews. I was glad at this point that he added the honest statement that in the conditions of Germany to-day any such protest is indeed difficult to make: "We may well ask ourselves," said Dr. Temple, "whether we ourselves in like situation could thus resist our own State in the name of Christ." The concluding passage of the Archbishop's sermon was designed particularly to appeal to the orthodox churches on the Continent; he pleaded for the unity of Christians, whether they were Norwegian, Dutch, British, French or Germans. He saw, I think, that the concept of European unity has grown amongst common people under Hitler's tyranny, and that demand for unity on the basis of common humanity will survive the war. "For all of us," he said, "the years after the war must be hard years; for the German people they must be years of pain and humiliation even to anguish." Out of common suffering a common civilisation may grow.

* * *

In occupied countries the latest massacres of the Jews have moved the Churches to active protest. Last August, for instance, French Catholic Priests, who seem to have accepted Pétainism up to that point, took a leading part in hiding hunted Jews and sheltering the children of those who were under arrest or were deported. Episcopal letters read in churches throughout unoccupied France recommended French Catholics to help the Jews. "Jews are men and women. . . . They are members of the human race. They are brothers as much as any others," read the Pastoral letter written by the Archbishop of Toulouse. In Paris the Suffragan Bishop wore the Star of David. The same gesture was made last May in Holland when Dutch Jews were ordered to wear the yellow Star of David. Dutchmen showed their sympathy by wearing a yellow star on their coats with the word "Hollander" inscribed in the middle. In Yugoslavia, Orthodox Greek bishops did the same as a means of checking the wave of anti-semitism then sweeping through that country. In Norway the Provisional Church Council, which has practically unanimous support of the clergy, protested to Quisling last November when Jewish property was confiscated and Jews deported to Eastern Europe. They wrote:

> If we remained silent in face of this legalised injustice to the Jews, we would ourselves be responsible and accomplices in the crime. . . . We therefore exhort the temporal authorities, and say in the name of Jesus Christ: Stop the persecution of the Jews. Stop the racial hate which is being spread in our country through the press.

* * *

"Audiences," writes my friend, who is a very practised and popular speaker, "had so far been warm and responsive as only Yorkshire audiences can be, but here, though it was still Yorkshire, I noticed from the first a difference. Of course it was a miserable night, and a meal of stewed tea, margarine and dry tongue might have jaundiced my outlook; but this did not, I feel sure, wholly explain it. Here they were, the audience, about 350 of them; dull, unresponsive, apathetic. Jokes at which other audiences had rocked produced at most a feeble titter; denunciations which had roused them to enthusiasm fell like stones into a well of uncomprehending indifference. It was like talking to puddings. 'Why on earth?' I asked the official on our long fog-bound journey home (we took four hours over fifty miles) 'Was it my fault?' 'No,' he said, 'It was the fault of inbreeding. Now you see—and that is what I wanted you to see—what happens to these isolated industrial communities, where everybody is in the employment of a single firm. The firm of X practically owns the place; X's own the works and the land; X's virtually own the parson—at least they pay most of his stipend; X's own most of the town, X's put up the Hall at which you spoke. Practically every one of the 5,000 inhabitants of the place is employed by X's. The firm discourages discussion and seeks to prevent inruption from the world outside. We had difficulty in getting them to consent to your meeting and, when they did agree, they insisted on running it and arranging all the details themselves. Since the war things have got worse. Everyone works long hours, seven days a week, so they never get a chance to go anywhere else. Before the war the women worked at home and kept going another world, though a small and restricted one, side by side, as it were, with the firm's world. But now the women also work for the firm, and there is no home life worth speaking of; there is only the firm, which permeates every corner of their lives. Men eat and drink the firm, think the firm, and draw their being from the firm. The management is fairly benevolent and the workers fairly content, or at least too apathetic to show discontent. X's workers are no longer self-conscious citizens; they are drugged robots well on the way to a Brave New World.'" Not a pleasant foretaste of what would happen if we were ever firmly saddled with the Corporate State.

* * *

Five gusts of Shavian wind blew through Hesketh Pearson's *Bernard Shaw*. I have enjoyed it hugely—all the more because I know that there are many more books of authentic Shaw to emerge from the hundred drawers that are stacked with Shaw's letters and post cards, together with copies of the replies and memoranda of their infuriated recipients. Mr. Pearson has made no effort to collect letters, and therefore his story is often extremely incomplete and sometimes inaccurate. For instance, he makes an astonishing statement on p. 328 about Shaw's connection with this paper. Clifford Sharp is no longer alive to consult, but I didn't think the issue on which he ceased to write articles in the old NEW STATESMAN was Sharp's refusal of an article about the *Lusitania*. Sharp found he did not want *unsigned* Shaw articles, and G.B.S. at that time wanted to write "leaders" in the NEW STATESMAN. Mr. Pearson adds the extraordinary remark that Shaw "wrote no more for the NEW STATESMAN until 1939"—a statement whose falsity he could have discovered by five minutes' inquiry. Amongst other writings here, he might at least have recalled Shaw's controversy with H. G. Wells about Stalin. This was one of Shaw's best controversies, and the pamphlet which contains their letters should not have escaped anyone's notice, least of all that of Shaw's biographer. But it's a grand book all the same.

* * *

The Ministry of Information film on the Pioneer Corps produces a mixed reaction. The feeling of the anti-Nazi refugees is sympathetically rendered; their training in non-combatant and to some degree in military duties is rather rosily presented. Who better qualified to deal with the psychology of exile and persecution than Arthur Koestler? But the audience is bound to ask why the officers seem content that highly skilled men should be used in this type of work. They must know by now all about the reliability or otherwise of men whom they have been commanding for years. It is shocking, at this time of day, to be shown a watch-maker driving piles, and a doctor digging trenches.

* * *

At one time during the great depression things became so bad that, according to one report from the U.S.A., even the people who never intended to pay in any case had stopped buying. Ten years afterwards the world is confronted with a complete reversal of the situation. You now have to spend most of your money on things you can't get.

* * *

A correspondent sends me the following pointed Clerihew.

The Beveridge Plan
Gives Mr. Everyman
An inch—lest he should snatch from ruddy hell
An ell.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to J. N. P. Pickering.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

The flat was formerly occupied by the Duchess of Windsor before her marriage, and is the most expensive flat the police have ever visited in connection with a murder mystery.—Report in the *Daily Mirror*.

"It has been brought to my notice that in my Christmas letter to the forces, published in the December supplement, I omitted the name of Mr. Stalin from the list of world leaders. This was quite unintentional on my part."—From the minister's notes in the parish magazine of St. Mungo's Parish Church, Penicuik, Midlothian.

It may be true that mankind in general will not enter this New Year with abounding joy in the present, but there is good reason why vegetarians should do so with increasing confidence in the future.—*Vegetarian Messenger*.

After the war the Soviets hope that after they have entered Germany and hanged the Nazi leaders they will be accepted as partners of Great Britain and of the Anglo-Saxon nations in the rebuilding of civilisation.—A diplomatic correspondent in *Empire News*.

It is curious how little we English know about Indo-China, the south-eastern tip of Asia, seeing that the whole of the western portion, i.e., Burma and Malaya, is ours.—*Times Literary Supplement*.

THE FRIGHTENING FRENCH

Marcel Peyrouton was last night officially announced as the new Governor-General of Algeria. . . . it is the worst choice that could have been made. Peyrouton is distrusted by Frenchmen of all parties, detested by the Arab population and loathed by De Gaulle and his colleagues.—*Daily Herald*, January 20th.

WHEN France under Pétain's control
Her pact of dishonour completed
Great Britain joined hands with De Gaulle
And the Free French fought on, undefeated.
De Gaulle whom the foe could not buy
Then saved Fighting France from despair—
Nous avons perdu une bataille !
Nous n'avons pas perdu la guerre !

When Darlan bade Frenchmen unite,
Before his appropriate removal,
He called to the ex-Vichyite,
Assured of the Allies' approval.
Algiers offers jobs in profusion,
But Fighting French need not apply;
If we fought for De Gaullists' inclusion
Nous avons perdu la bataille.

As the generals instal in his place
The Admiral's fitting successor
The cause of free men we disgrace
By appointing Tunisia's oppressor.
Though we fight as Democracy's saviour
We give Fascists a snug pied-à-terre—
All traitors to France are in favour—
Les gens qui ont perdu la guerre.

Giraud still remains on the scene,
But since Giraud is no politician,
With a record so curiously clean
How can he retain his position?
In Algiers under our occupation
The sun of the Fascists rides high,
And though it's but for the duration
De Gaulle a perdu la bataille.

And what though our armies advance,
Sweeping on to a victory glorious,
If the Allies desert Fighting France
By appeasing appeasers notorious,
If Vichy must be our ally,
If Free Frenchmen are given no share,
Nous aurons gagné les batailles,
Mais nous aurons perdu la guerre.

SAGITTARIUS

THE SWEDISH POSITION

(The author of this article was formerly *News Chronicle* correspondent in Scandinavia and Swedish editor, B.B.C.)

SINCE the summer of 1940 there have been big changes in Sweden. When the war began Sweden was a small power living in a great military past. After her disillusionment in the League of Nations, she had returned to her traditional diplomacy, whose watchword was "What do the affairs of Poland concern us?" Social progress at home was her chief pursuit; and it was to be a safeguard of Swedish neutrality in a Europe at war. Who, argued Swedes, will drag us into their ideological war, when they have not as much as an idea to offer us which we have not already got? Are we not better fed, housed, educated and insured than any nation in the world outside Scandinavia? And, indeed, since 1936 German newspapers had been trying to wheedle sympathy out of Swedish social democracy with flattery and with testimony, for instance, that there was nothing "foreign" about Swedish Marxism (*sic*).

Nevertheless Sweden maintained a small army and a relatively strong navy. When the war broke out she increased her military establishment and training. She was determined to remain neutral. But when Russia attacked Finland she supplied Finland with arms and munitions; and about 10,000 Swedes, nearly all Social Democrats, volunteered to serve with the Finnish army. Paradoxically, as it seemed to many at the time, she refused Britain transit rights for troops to support the Finns.

The Swedish position at the time may be thus summarised: Sweden knew that Finland could not defend herself indefinitely against the Russians, even with foreign help. To help her unofficially would strengthen Finland's bargaining position. To transit Allied troops would be to draw a red herring across the whole of the North, and to risk provoking a conflict between Russia and the Western Powers on Swedish and Norwegian territory, for the benefit only of Germany, who would close ranks, if and so long as it suited her, with her future enemy, Russia. I was informed in Stockholm early in February, 1940, that the Germans would have been "willing" to allow Sweden to transit Allied troops provided they could be satisfied that "a fully effective purpose could be served." The Swedes were unable to satisfy even themselves on that point, as the capacity of the railways which would have to be used was great enough only to permit the transit of two divisions a month! (It was actually made public in Sweden a few weeks ago what every Swede knew at the time, that Germany threatened to attack Sweden if she declared war upon Russia.) Russia's purpose in attacking Finland was to shorten and not to lengthen her front in her coming war with Germany. Sweden felt safe, therefore, from the direction of the East. Her moderation gained for her, in fact, the respect and the confidence of her traditional enemies, the Russians. If there was danger it was from the direction of the South. Germany, however, depended at that time upon Swedish iron ore, and the Swedish ironfields are situated in the far north. In the Fenno-Russian Treaty, which Sweden had no hand in negotiating, there was a clause stipulating that a railway should be built connecting the Finnish, and thereby the northern Swedish railways, with the Murmansk railway at Kandalaksha. Nobody in Stockholm could think of any commercial purpose this extension could serve. The Germans made attempts to gain holdings in the Swedish ironfields. The Swedes refused to sell, but made preparations to blow up the ironfield railways.

After the Fenno-Russian Treaty was signed Sweden made an attempt to form a bloc of the Northern countries to resist aggression against any one of them from any quarter. On the evening of April 8th, 1940, having heard that the German fleet was on the move, I telephoned Government politicians in Oslo and in Stockholm and asked "What are you going to do about it?" In Oslo they said "It depends upon Stockholm," and in Stockholm they said "It depends upon Oslo"—in each case with some emotion.

In fact, had the Germans landed in Sweden as well on April 9th, they would have had a walk-over. There were very few Swedish troops in the south at the time. And Sweden had actually given Finland more military help than she could afford. Sweden, however, mobilised, intensified military production, and stiffened her back. She refused the Germans transit facilities, just as she had refused the Western Powers, although she could have allowed them without a breach of neutrality. Parts of Sweden were blacked out, and emergency military measures were taken several times after visits by the German Minister, Prince zu Wied, to the Swedish Foreign Office, which he usually left trembling with anger.

The Allied débacle in Norway lowered Allied prestige, and it was then that Sweden made transit concessions, limited to medical supplies and personnel and to the passage to and fro of German troops on leave. During the campaign itself I received many reports of restlessness among Swedish troops at the frontier, who wanted to be taken off the leash. Officers were more disciplined. Public feeling was stirred by some unfortunate interludes when Swedes were compelled to fire on Norwegians who had accidentally crossed the frontier.

After the fall of France, Allied prestige sank to zero. One day, after a secret session of the Riksdag, I was treated with almost inhuman kindness by friends of mine who were members of it, and who thought it their duty to break to me the worst imaginable news as fact. (German journalists at press conferences treated me suddenly with awkward courtesy. I disagreed with colleagues, and I could almost have found refuge in hobnobbing with Italians.) Stockholm was convinced that Britain was "for it." Sympathies did not change. Ninety per cent. of the Swedish population were on the side of Britain, not because Britain was Britain, but because Britain was democratic. Sweden looks backwards as well as forwards, and democracy and freedom come before socialism in Sweden.

An institute of public opinion was formed along Gallup lines. It had to frame its questions carefully. It has proved that since the German occupation of Norway sympathy with the Allied Powers has increased. There is plenty of other evidence of development in Swedish public opinion in the last two and a half years. For instance, a lecture tour was organised for a Norwegian and a Finnish social democrat. The Norwegian was applauded loudly. The Finn was hissed. Swedish volunteers in Finland now number about one-tenth of those who volunteered in the winter campaign, and they include many Aalanders of Finnish race. (The Aaland Islands, though part of Finland, are autonomous and neutral.) It can be estimated now that 95 per cent. of the population are on the Allied side. And it is even being rumoured widely in modern, democratic Sweden that each time so far that Sweden has been at war with Russia it has been because Sweden had attacked Russia.

Factors which have incensed Swedes in particular against Germany are: the hostage system in Norway, the persecution there of schoolmasters, intellectuals, trade unionists, and churchmen, and the toughness of the Germans in their commercial dealings with Sweden. On account of German defaults, state credits to Germany have now been stopped, and private credits forbidden.

In the recent municipal elections in Sweden the Nazi party lost its representation totally, and on the whole the parties of the Left, including the Communists, gained. The Social Democrats, who have a majority in both houses, but who have been long in office, actually lost some seats, from which it may be concluded that the Swedish public, though it supports the Social Democratic stand against Hitler, would like that stand to be even stiffer.

It is being felt in Sweden that circumstances may arise during this year which may again endanger Swedish neutrality. Germany might want, quite suddenly, to transit troops again—and by the quickest route, which is to say through Sweden. In 1941 Sweden made a concession to Finland under German threats for the transit of one division from Norway. It was the Engelbrecht division. A few weeks later the Swedes agreed, not under pressure, to transit its mauled remnants back to Norway. The Germans had first asked for the transit of seven divisions, which the Swedes had refused even to discuss with them. But since then the Swedish Army has more than recovered its own position, and there has been no more partial yielding to German threats. And the Germans have built roads, through very difficult country, between Norway and Finland north of the Swedish frontier.

The Swedish Army, which during the time gained has been well modernised, is thinking now in terms of a possible second campaign in Norway. Public opinion would be against any concessions to Germany in such an event, and feeling about that is nearly as strong now in the Riksdag as in the country.

Sweden can put upwards of 600,000 men into the field. Recent manœuvres have been for offensive operations. Sweden has élite troops, probably better than the German. Recently the army has been democratised. Defence Minister Sköld announced as long ago as last summer that Nazi sympathisers had been cleared out of responsible posts in the forces. The navy, which has recently been increased, is now probably—since the scuttling of the French fleet—second only to the British Navy in Europe.

Sweden still recognises the Norwegian Government in London, and during the last two years there has been a great improvement in the relations between the two Governments. Nearly all Norwegians agree now that, had the Swedes responded to their requests for help in April, 1940, it would have been untimely, and a strategic mistake. A former Norwegian premier has stated that opinion publicly.

As it is, the food position in Sweden is worse than it is in Britain, and, thanks to the failure of German deliveries there is neither domestic coal nor heating (though hot baths will be allowed, as at Christmas, for another spell at Easter); but public morale has risen with the knowledge that the Swedish Army, instead of having been defeated in 1940, is now a first-class force within striking distance of strategic points, including the Norwegian coast. The Swedish air force is also preparing for offensive operations. Until recently Sweden only had fighter planes, but now Swedish industry is producing dive-bombers, which are claimed to be better than the British.

In 1939 Sweden refused to conclude a non-aggression pact with Germany.

ERIC DANCY

THE GAUNTLET TO THE CHURCH

IN his recent speech at Birmingham the Archbishop of Canterbury anticipated a gauntlet which has not yet been thrown down. "I do not think," he said, "we ought, at this time anyhow, to embark on a campaign for disestablishment. It is an immensely elaborate process and would mean that we should be tied up with readjusting the machine for years to come, when we ought to be concentrating upon the real task of the Church rather than upon its relations to any State."

When, however, this gauntlet is thrown down, I, for one, hope that it will be because of the Church's relation not to the State but to the working-man, and because the Church's real task cannot be tackled until the whole question of establishment has been tackled first.

Two stubborn facts are plain in our national situation. One is the dwindling spiritual power of all forms of institutional Chrisitanity. The other is the growing political power of the working-class. These two facts are not merely coincidental; they are interrelated. So far from religion being distinct from politics, it is inseparable from them.

It is no mere accident that, as the Church's influence dwindles, the strange new consciousness of its right to govern grows in the minds of a class which has hitherto been willing to be governed.

It would be wild to assume that the contemporary urban multitudes know what they want, or that they have become politically responsible persons in the last few years. What can be certainly discerned is that more of them are articulate than formerly. Hitherto the multitude was willing to leave government to a governing class, so long as it looked competent and honest and believed in itself. Now many in the multitude are reluctant to leave government in the hands of their present governors, because they do not look competent or honest, nor, from many signs, do they believe in themselves. This newly articulate type of working-man is clearer about what he does not want than about what he does want. For instance, he does not want the capitalist who uses his labour and skill as a means to make profits in which the workman has little or no share. He does not want the parson who till recently has been able to accept the capitalist system as righteous. He does not want the humanitarian philanthropist who continues oblivious of the discovery that " to drain a swamp is better than many barrels of quinine." Nor does he want the crooked Labour leader who has used the wrongs of the workers as a springboard from which he could leap into the capitalist class himself. Once upon a time, the British working-man did not trust anybody who was not a gentleman. Now, it is almost true to say that he does not trust anybody at all.

Out of this conglomeration of negatives, it is possible to form a positive idea of what the working-man wants. He wants new leaders and a new political faith. But these, in his present mood, are difficult to achieve. For his mood, as has been seen, is negative. How does he arrive out of distrust to trust? And who are the men he can trust? Who have emerged out of the ruck of recent politicians who are sufficiently disinterested to gain the loyalty of the working-man, as, in days gone by, the products of Dr. Arnold's selective education gained it? I am inclined to believe that the working-man will prefer to trust leaders who share his own material needs rather than those whose material needs the capitalist system already satisfies. At this point the two main facts of the situation begin to bear closely each upon the other. For the parson is one of the leaders whom the working-man has rejected, and he has been so rejected for precisely the same reason as the others are rejected. The parson's material needs are already sufficiently satisfied under the capitalist system. He does not share the needs of the working-man. He does not lack good housing, good education, social status, and security. He may be overhoused, but never underhoused. His children have excellent educational privileges. He is a member of the middle-class from the moment when he turns his collar round, and, especially in the Establishment (provided he is not too outspoken), his fear of unemployment is exiguous. Of all these things the now articulate working-man has long been aware. A Church which does not share his need has certainly no right to his allegiance.

Clearly, the working-man's determination to have his material needs satisfied has grown in strength during the present war. Any who reckon that this determination can be circumvented or whittled down after the war are dangerously short-sighted. The working-man is on the march—leaderless as yet. But he will get leaders; of what kind cannot be foretold. It is all too possible that he may get the wrong leaders. For material needs unsatisfied make for a materialist attitude to life, and a materialist attitude to life begets the most dangerous forms of political philosophy. It is of the utmost importance that the working-man find leaders who have more in their heads than the idea that life consists entirely of economic permutations and combinations. Now it is precisely this materialist view of bread and butter which the Gospel of Christ shows to be false and hollow. The Gospel does not minimise the importance of bread and butter. It is indeed greatly concerned with daily bread for every man. But it sets the satisfaction of material needs in its right place in a very rich human programme. The richness of its programme for all people is its claim to the title of Gospel. What the working-man also needs is to see *why* good housing, good education, social equality, and economic security are necessary to his manhood. And there is no doubt that the Church's real task is to answer that question.

Our situation to-day is grave, precisely because the world's workers are alienated from the world's religion at a time when the world is beginning to be theirs at last. It remains to be proved that a reconciliation is still possible, and that Christianity can inform and inspire the workers of the world in the days of their supremacy as, in times past, it was frequently offered to them to comfort and placate them in the days of their subordination.

Clearly, the Church of England has to do something very drastic if it is to convert the present overdraft on the bank of the working-man's confidence into a credit balance. It has to leave its secure position in the old order and voluntarily to cross over to the side of the workman, " in his most need to be by his side." To do that, it must break down the barriers which at present separate the clergy from sharing the working-man's need. These barriers are Establishment and Endowment.

To the fact of its establishment and endowment can be traced most if not all of the failure of the Church of England to be a truly national Church. *There* originates the falsity of the clergy's position as privileged officers of what is, in appearance at any rate, a small and predominantly middle-class body of partisan individuals held together not by the love of Christ but by the necessity of conserving their status and privileges; for, if they remain together in a *disestablished* Church, no man ought to doubt that the love of Christ and of His people binds them in fellowship. As it is now, many men have doubts concerning them. They doubt, because they think, not without reason, that it is the Establishment with its endowments which makes them a Church.

Many things point to the disestablishment of the Church of England as the main and primary constructive task in the present religious situation; and many reasons could be argued in its favour, but all of them are subsidiary and incidental to the one great and all-compelling challenge of our day, the call to the Church to come out from her secure position in the old order and throw in her lot actively with that leaderless confraternity of need whom Christ proclaimed as the people He had come to seek and to save, and with whose need He actively identified Himself.

It is not going to be easy to persuade the clergy of these things, for to do so it will be necessary to reorientate the whole clerical mind, which is at present more concerned with the Church than with the people. What is needful is that those within the Establishment who realise the hard facts of their situation should band themselves together without delay in a drive for disestablishment, taking as their slogan, " People matter more than churches." For not until the Church has become capable of winning at least the respect, if not the confidence and affection, of a large percentage of the nation, will it be able to effect its real task, which is, in the name of God, to cleanse and inspire men's politics, to give meaning and purpose to men's work, and to show forth as a light before men a community in which all in common, give what they are able to give, and receive what they need. Disestablishment therefore stands out clearly as a major issue before the Church to-day.

JOSEPH MCCULLOCH

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COLONIAL STYLE

THE approach to Tripoli seems as good an occasion as any to consider an aspect of the Colonial problem which has not often been raised: I mean the question of style. For in the colonial field the world has no greater contrast than the attitude and practice of the Italians in this matter, and the British. With the British, one may say, it is the good that counts; with the Italians it is the beautiful. As the Eighth Army has advanced in Libya, correspondents have reported the good-natured laughter which greeted the various obelisks, busts and other public objects erected by the Fascist regime, and now lying, like Ozymandias, grotesquely in the sand. The great arch west of Agheila, marking the boundary of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, and redeeming to some extent the featureless desert round the Gulf of Sirte, has been given the name of Marble Arch.

But Italian colonial style is not all megalomaniac. H. N. Brailsford is not a man likely to be suspected of accepting the fundamentals of Fascism, but he is one of the many who have remarked on the beauty and harmony of Italian public works in Africa. As in the colonies, so at home: I remember great hoardings, very beautifully executed, announcing in 1939 a forthcoming colonial exhibition at Naples. I saw designs of this exhibition: they did not resemble the Wembley Exhibition of 1924, nor the Glasgow Exhibition of 1937.

Of course, the Italians had the advantage that their colonies were a late child of a very old and beautiful cultural region. The British colonies do not generally lie in such favoured zones, nor have they ever had money lavished upon them. For the most part, they are the by-products of commercial activity with none of the advantages of planning and *étatisme*. Colonial architects have to be concerned with immediate details like the action of creosote in resisting white ants (a subject to which several pages are devoted in Lord Lugard's *Dual Mandate*, the "bible" of the British Colonial Service). And those responsible for building are mostly engineers of the Public Works Department, with little or no architectural experience. In addition, many colonial towns, or at least their public buildings, were built in the period of greatest colonial expansion and of the worst taste, at the end of the nineteenth century. But when all is said, the dowdy provincialism of most British colonies, streaked by such horrors as the commercial hoardings outside the beautiful Colombo Harbour, is difficult to excuse. Attempts have been made to correct this trend, but, alas, they have fallen into the hands of imitators of Renaissance tradition, like Sir Herbert Baker, who have studded East Africa in particular with inappropriate buildings, grandiose, almost Mussolinian, in what I might call the "porte cochère" style.

The memorial of this period is undoubtedly the Government centre of Lusaka, a miniature New Delhi, still incomplete in the scrub of one of our poorest colonies, Northern Rhodesia. But it seems that the period may be drawing to an end.

The English have always been more successful in the domestic arts rather than in the public. So the most striking success of the *style colonial anglais* may have been the defence force uniform of Fiji. This tale is old history, and, of course, it has a utilitarian twist. No recruits could be found for this force until one day it was decided to make the uniform a scarlet jacket upon a native sulu, a white skirt opening downwards like the petals of a flower. The press next day at the recruiting booth is said to have been overwhelming. This seems to show what the response of colonial peoples would be to more beautiful houses and lovelier clothes. It is notorious that Lancashire textiles sold to the African tribes are of a pattern much finer than anything given to the working people of this country. And there are signs that this good

the glory on their wings

Night raids . . .
Daylight raids . . .
Intruder raids . . .
into the dawn—
across the bars of
sunset, through
rain and storm.
BUT . . . whatever
the weather—
cloudy or clear
there is always . . .
always a glory
on their wings—
for they go to
avenge the innocent,
to break the tyrant,
to release a
continent from
slavery . . .
to save mankind.
No enterprise more
glorious in the
story of the world.
Once they were few,
now they are
many—they must
be more—more,
and still more,
until only *they*
darken the new
dawn . . .
and their tenuous
shadows are the
only darkness
on the fields . . .
and tents . . . and
towns of Europe.
MORE . . .
still MORE

* * * *

Until this glorious consummation is achieved, we on the civilian front cannot pause or relax. However hard we work, however much we deny ourselves, however much we save from our earnings, our best must be counted short of our needs until Victory is in our grasp. . . . Are you sure that you are saving ENOUGH ?

Issued by the National Savings Committee

work in the smaller arts will increase. As yet, they are small. For instance, a start is being made on the Gold Coast to replace the corrugated iron which had been brought for generations by commercially minded men to serve as roofing and to destroy the tropical scene, with tiles from an industry exploiting native clay. (The man responsible has just seen the art syllabus in his school adopted by the Cambridge Education Authority for English children.) Finally, Colonial designs naturally follow the style at home, and this is now improving.

It may be said that preoccupation with aesthetic matters in the present condition of most of our colonies is a waste of time. But I do not think that it is. Superficially, no doubt, the design of Government House or of defence force uniform is a little matter. But this question of form and colour is linked with the imagination. The failure of imagination at home has its effect upon our own urban population. How much more so, then, with colonial peoples who have the instinctive reaction of the senses of a more primitive development? The same cause has marked our failure both at home and overseas: it is the result of the gulf between the men of ideas and the men of power, whether moral or official. We may hope, perhaps, that, despite the laughter, the campaigns in North Africa will have something of the effect of the crusades on the visual education of the men who will be returning, many of them perhaps en route to the colonies, after the war. As for the colonies themselves, and their peoples, their stylistic development is slowly but surely improving; and that is the thing which really matters in the end.

HENRY SWANZY

EMERGING PICTURE

MOST of us have, at one time or another, enjoyed that exciting moment when, tilting the bath of developer gently to and fro under the red lamp, we have watched the photograph rise to the blank surface of the paper and crystallise into lines or patches of shadow until a complete picture emerges. There they are, the group on the steps: heterogeneous people brought together for a single purpose, fugitive yet friendly, united by the clear fact that they are all facing the same way and are willing so to be perpetuated. And their surroundings—the window with its Venetian blind, the anxious spaniel, the "period" tennis racquet—assist and affirm our conclusion. These people are friends, we say (though some had not met each other either before or since): together they mean something; and the statement, though in many ways temerarious, is underpinned by the most constant of social truths.

Artistic movements—the most productive, the most durable—follow the same course of development. "Bloomsbury" was an agglomeration of this kind; it lasted, roughly, twenty-five years, and produced some remarkable people, books and pictures, during which time half a dozen groups, in England and on the Continent, put out flags, shouted slogans, printed manifestos, fired off squibs and even revolvers—and fizzled out in a few months. In art, revolutions cannot afford to be violent: they must crystallise gradually, percolate from all directions, slide unobtrusively into position; then, suddenly, the figures are there on the steps and the picture is taken. It is quite time enough *after* the camera shutter has clicked for the members of the group to realise what has been happening to put them on the spot.

Every movement in art contains the germ of its own decay; that of romantic music was a tendency to Impreciseness. The thin end of this wedge is barely perceptible, but by the time we get to the *Symphonie Fastastique* it is thick enough to be visible to the naked eye, and its earlier implications become obvious in the light reflected back from the *fin de siècle* in England and Germany. Precision is all. To write, or paint, or compose, so as to avoid a confused impression, you must begin by feeling precisely. Start from a vague emotion, however powerful, and the probabilities are you will go on to find an inexact expression (style, harmony, "placing") that will seek to justify itself by inflation, lurid chiaroscuro, "virile" posturing, and all the other melodramatic ways of distracting attention from a fundamentally weak conception.

This germ has been very active in the music of the last hundred years, with devastating effects, not only on composers, but on orchestras and executants generally, who have taken their cue with alacrity; for it is much easier to create an impressive, all-overish effect with *Ein Heldenleben*, a Scriabin Sonata, or a Bax Symphony, than it is to make an exact noise with a Gibbons Motet, the "Paris" Symphony, or a Haydn Quartet; much easier to conduct like Furtwängler than like Monteux or Koussevitzky—to play Chopin like Mark Hambourg or Pouishnoff than like Rubinstein or Casadesus.

The recall to order was sounded more than twenty years ago; but the classical revival ushered in by Stravinsky limited itself to adopting the externals of eighteenth-century style; the content was either comically romantic or merely jejune, the result vague and sterile. This lapse into cynicism has killed French music for the time being, while in England the romantic sunset continues to linger, under the influence of Delius, on the one hand, and of a frigid modalism on the other. The official line is covertly or openly anti-professional, and heavily biased against any suspicion of cleverness. It has been all the easier to take this line—always a popular one in England—because, among the qualities possessed by some important contemporary figures in English music, cleverness is conspicuous by its absence. This seems to me a pity. Of course, cleverness can be used as a substitute for profounder and more durable qualities, and the calamity of Richard Strauss is often cited in proof of this. But even if that composer's decadence be not rather attributable (as I think it is) to some failure in character, to some hopeless sin against the Holy Ghost, I think it is worth considering what *Till Eulenspiegel*, *Don Quixote* and *Der Rosenkavalier* would be like if their composer had not been a supremely clever man. In any case, it seems to me folly to underrate the proper function of cleverness, which is to discern the more distant connections between things and ideas, and in the process of artistic creation to keep *all* one's technical equipment perpetually conjugated with the faculty of poetic invention. Only failure in this respect would account for what strikes me as the sheer inability of composers like Holst, Moeran, and Rubbra to deal convincingly with their often fine inventions. Dullness is the demon that lies in wait for artists who are insufficiently clever; and the history of English art (especially music) in the last hundred and fifty years is strewn with such casualties. We cannot afford any more just at present; happily a generation of creative and executant artists is just reaching a stage of development in which they clearly illustrate a salutary reaction. True to the form outlined above, they have dropped in from different quarters at different times; they are in no sense a "movement." Let us glance at some of their work—at the most recent poems of Louis MacNeice ("Nostalgia," "Convoy," the translations from Louis Aragon's *Le Crève-Cœur*), of W. R. Rodgers and Cecil Day Lewis (the sonnets on Childhood and Youth); at a street scene by Lawrence Gowing, a landscape by Graham Sutherland, a collection of people and objects by William Scott. Listen, then, to the *Symphonic Studies* of Alan Rawsthorne or his *Eight Bagatelles* and the way they are played by Denis Mathews (on side 12 of the new recording of Moeran's Symphony), to Michael Tippett's *Fantasy* for piano and orchestra, to Benjamin Britten's *Hymn to St. Cecilia* or the *Ceremony of Carols*. Utterly dissimilar in origin and intention though these works may be, they have important new elements in common—important because they indicate an as yet latent development in the history of twentieth-century art.

These elements are precision of thought (and thus of image), unity and firmness of conception, and a technique that, if it err, does not err on the side of weakness. Such a programme implies a considerable change in what we have been used to seeing and hearing and reading. Take MacNeice's "Convoy." The poem exploits a double image and ends by referring back to the private life; but the first stanza contains all we need for our present purpose.

Together, keeping in line, slow as if hypnotised,
Across the blackboard sea in sombre echelon
The food-ships draw their wakes. No Euclid could
  have devised
Neater means to a more essential end—
Unless the chalk breaks off, the convoy is surprised.

This is extremely adroit, and the beauty—not of a decorative order—emerges from the originality and appositeness of the imagery, which scales down the event described but leaves it its full importance. To say this is, among other things, to give cleverness its due. Now put this poem beside the drawing of an air-raid shelter by Henry Moore and, say, the first movement of Britten's *Sinfonia da Requiem*; the cap fits in each case. There is no more room anywhere here for the *à-peu-près*, the improvised gesture, the pretty flourish, the lucky mistake, than there is for romantic obscurity or private dream.

Indeed, few things are more striking than the recoil from obscurity noticeable in all these artists. But, to create beauty and profundity from plainness; to be simply melodic and yet not silly or obvious; to describe what is before you, as Scott or Gowing or Moynihan do, yet never to diminish the poetry inherent in the subject; to have a firm and unified conception of the work before you start: all this requires a controlled cleverness always on tap.

The cleverness and the plainness are perhaps as remarkable in Britten's recent work as anywhere in the field I have sketched. I am thinking not so much of the *Michelangelo Sonnets* nor even of the *Hymn to St. Cecilia*. The latter is direct, transparent and too patt to be hard to grasp, even at a first hearing. But though it is on a small scale it is not simple in its mechanics and therefore yields, I think, to the *Ceremony of Carols* in a certain touching and tender quality which is among this composer's most precious assets. To be sure, the parallels are available—in the piano playing of Denis Mathews, in the Day Lewis sonnets on childhood, in the landscapes of Ivon Hitchins—and for a comparison we need only go back to Berlioz's masterpiece, *L'Enfance du Christ*, which the B.B.C. gave us an opportunity of hearing the other day. But there is more in these carols: they are somehow mysterious (I am thinking especially of the most beautiful of all, "There Is No Rose"), with that mystery of simple sights revealed suddenly in all the dire strength of their essence by a light that unifies and renders precise both detail and form. This is not a nineteenth-century Christmas: there is no plum pudding, no jollification; but the picture is edged with a mysterious brightness—the figure of Innocence undertowed by a distant sadness. The vision is precise; the tunes are unforgettable; they etch themselves into the mind. I look forward with impatience to Britten's string quartet, a newish work which has not yet been played here. It should bridge the impressions made by the *Carols* and the *Sinfonia*.

Meanwhile, the executants are keeping pace with all this. A short time ago Noël Mewton-Wood gave, at the National Gallery, an extraordinary performance of Schumann's *Davidsbündler Tänze*. It was strong, it was sensitive and in the highest degree poetical, and it was wonderfully precise both in unity of conception and adaptation of means to ends. A performance by this pianist of the *Kinderszenen* would, I suspect, prove a companion piece to Britten's Carols. In Mewton-Wood we have a real musical intellect at the service of imagination, and his faults (a tendency to exaggeration—largo for adagio, a brutal fortissimo where a simple forte is indicated) are, as I pointed out in the case of MacNeice, not those of weakness or a technical clutch that fails to engage the cogs of the invention. With pianists like this and ensembles like that at Morley College, whose performances do not rely on mere enthusiasm, the composers of to-day stand a better chance than with the larger musical bodies in this country, tied as these are to an outworn tradition.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

THE MOVIES

"A-Haunting We Will Go" and "Invincible?" at the Plaza

"The Vanishing Virginian" and "Letter from Ulster," at the Empire

"You Were Never Lovelier" and "Malta, G.C.," at the Gaumont

Escape or not? Every one of the new feature films happens to be accompanied by a war documentary, and though most people will follow the stars or flock to a likely sounding title, the half-hour documentary, tucked away in the programme, is likely to have the more impact for being unexpected. This is especially true of *Invincible?* and *Malta, G.C.*

I enjoy Laurel and Hardy, whether the film is good or not; the little man's tears and spoonerisms, the big one's fringe and courtly rebuke provide a classic outline for farce. There is one perfect sequence in *A-Haunting We Will Go*, with the pair assisting at a performance of the Indian rope trick. Hardy blows a clarinet, Laurel clings to the top of the rope, which threatens to collapse each time the music falters. Alas, there are not enough such moments in this comedy-thriller, which deviates into gangsterism and a stage show by Dante the Magician; still I enjoyed it. I should like to see a new series of Laurel and Hardy "shorts"; twenty minutes to half an hour, with the whole screen theirs, is their proper span.

The second of the M.O.I.'s monthly films is something of a scoop. *Invincible?* consists of a German news-reel captured in North Africa, and its propaganda is directed at French audiences. The Nazi picture (in October, 1942) of Egypt threatened, Stalingrad overcome, India rebelling and the Middle East about to fall into Axis hands is pictorially blown to bits. Good journalism.

The Vanishing Virginian gives that excellent character actor, Mr. Frank Morgan, a chance to cut a dash and pose and rage charmingly. It is the sort of part, as a matter of fact, that any competent actor can do on his head, and is in no way comparable with Mr. Morgan's recent performance in *Tortilla Flat*. However, this is his film, a sentimental comedy about a patriarch of the dear old 1910's, with faithful darkies, Republican politics, buggies, Southern sunlight and family tableaux in plenty. Mr. Morgan's endearing tantrums and spotless cuffs are the high spots of the film. Miss Kathryn Grayson (*école de* Durbin) assists. The documentary in this programme, built round a doughboy's letter home, is a quietly appealing combination of American voices and Irish landscapes.

Fred Astaire's feet and patent-leather grin, a Mexican dance band, Miss Rita Hayworth, orchids, weddings and silver weddings, Lochinvar, an imbecile plot, and Uncle Menjou are the ingredients of a musical, *You Were Never Lovelier*, which ought to be a good deal gayer than it is. The dancing is good, but never carries one away. *Malta, G.C.*, is a moving tribute to the island which has survived its 3,000th raid. The Crown Film and R.A.F. and Army Film Units have done an admirable job with material that it would be hard to bungle. Glimpses of architecture, cactuses, busy streets, men working in the fields, a children's outdoor class, broaden the picture of an outpost relentlessly battered. Fact, this week, is an easy winner.

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PLAYS AND PICTURES

New Year Exhibition, at the Leicester Galleries

This highly agreeable mixed exhibition includes a few works by foreign artists, notably Utrillo, Guys, Dufy, Kokoshka, and Signac. But most of the pictures are English, and characteristic in their virtues and defects. When the English artist depends on his sensibility to suggest an impression of something seen, he succeeds in pleasing. When he depends upon his imaginative powers or upon formal construction, he usually looks amateur. To this last generalisation two paintings are signal exceptions, an early Matthew Smith of a seated woman, and William Scott's *Soldier and Girl Sleeping*. In each of these pictures the artist has put all his cards on the table and said what he wanted with a "Take it or leave it" air. Ruskin Spear's *Girl in a Deck-Chair* almost deserves a similar compliment. A number of works are successful in our native style, preferring suggestion to statement. Sickert's *Wellington House* is a magnificent example; other happy instances are Phelan Gibb's landscape, Wilson Steer's *Shipyard*, Clifford Hall's *Southsea*, Connard's *Winter*, John Steegman's *House in Merioneth*, Allan Walton's *Regatta Day*, and pictures by Morland Lewis and Ivon Hitchens. Paul Nash in *November Moon* is more vivid in colour and more openly charming than he usually allows himself to be; Anthony Devas's portrait is uncommonly good. John Piper shows excellent romantic topography, and John Craxton is the most interesting of the "imaginative" school. But the picture that remains most decidedly in the memory, apart from the Sickert, the Utrillo, the Matthew Smith and the William Scott, is the Still Life by Rodrigo Moynihan, a work in which bravura is beautifully combined with sensibility.

Correspondence

FREEDOM OF THOUGHT

Sir,—Reading in last week's New Statesman of Sir James Grigg's action withdrawing the Beveridge pamphlet from the troops and suppressing discussion of it, prompts me to draw attention to an incident in the same *genre* which occurred to me recently. Blimp, thus officially encouraged, is again becoming terribly alive and his lieutenants are stalking the land to root out those civilians who may be foolish enough to discuss the Beveridge Report or other controversial issues in public. Under the guise of guarding "morale," they are training to become the English stormtroopers of the future

I was in a public lounge in this town the other night with some friends among whom was a high official of the Ministry of Food, a captain, and another army officer I mention this only to suggest that we were not patently Bolsheviks or Fifth Columnists Our friendly argument ranged over many topics. from how to deal with the German people after the war to conscientious objection, from post-war reconstruction to various aspects of patriotism. Not a word was uttered in any way incompatible with the democratic rights of a loyal British subject, and in no sense could our conversation be interpreted as spreading alarm and despondency. Certainly it was controversial and stimulating, and many opposing views were expressed. We were all, in our different ways confirmed anti-Fascists, and some of us had been so long before it became *de rigueur* One member of our party stated his opinion that every German man, woman and child should be exterminated; I expostulated, saying this was both impracticable and immoral. Again, another said we should be proud we had been British; I replied it was hardly a matter for pride we had been *born* British but rather we could congratulate ourselves on being members of a community where freedom of opinion and human dignity were respected, and to retain which we were prepared to fight and suffer. I mention all this only to indicate the manner of our discussion.

At this point a youngish lieutenant-colonel strode up to our table and demanded my Identity Card. I was at first nonplussed and greatly startled. A sudden stillness fell on the crowded lounge. In the ominous silence a shudder went down my spine such as I have not experienced since, at the German frontier six years ago my *Daily Express* was seized and confiscated by jack-booted German Customs Guards After hesitation, I handed over my Identity Card to him from which he took notes. I then offered him my Discharge Papers, and asked him to note those too. He was for a moment abashed, and said, "I did not like the tone of your conversation," and walked away

It is not the personal humiliation that remains with me. I understand he was fully entitled by law to act as he did. It is the manner in which he did it and the grounds on which he acted that has alarmed me. It may well have been the action of an individual anxious to emphasise his authority. Nevertheless, it is a dangerous portent. If one can no longer enter a public place and discuss those things for which we are allegedly fighting to uphold without having one's status questioned, then the people of this country are being duped. It becomes farcical to fight Fascism abroad if we are to permit incipient Fascism to take root at home. I profoundly believe we are battling for something very real but it is high-handed Army actions such as this that make for cynicism and doubt. The gulf between Government pronouncements and their military interpretation is often sadly wide.

I trust you will see fit to publicise this incident through your columns, which are so often the only stronghold from which encroachments on our liberty can be fought.

Cyril G. Naylor

"PSYCHOLOGICAL DISARMAMENT"

Sir,—A good while ago (before any suggestions appeared in the press) I formed the opinion that post-war supervision and, in effect, control of German education would have to be undertaken by the United Nations. And this, in spite of the fact that to me, as an educationist, it is clear that the project might easily present itself as Satan casting out sin. Nowadays the idea seems to be receiving a good deal of attention.

Mr. Brailsford objects to it, but a careful examination of his thesis has not in any way shaken my belief in the necessity for control. Mr. Brailsford sees that in the first place a drastic purge of educational personnel will be necessary and affirms that this, if done by English or American Commissioners, will make of the dismissed teachers national martyrs; that it will release a spirit of contravention. But is there anything to suggest that the dismissal if done by Germans will not have a similar effect? Mr. Brailsford's admissions in this matter should be carefully noted; they undermine his case.

Then, too, in the matter of books, it must be affirmed that *every* text book will have to be eliminated; so thorough was the Nazi system that even arithmetic, chemistry and physics texts must go. The Commissioner will not, as we are told, have to "ferret out all the standard Nazi books." Mr. Brailsford cannot possibly be ignorant of the fact that there *are* no other books; that no ferreting will be required; I fear Mr. Brailsford is letting his case run away with him.

Can it possibly be imagined that all the Nazi texts may remain in use, gradually to be replaced by saner texts as and when the "good" Germans succeed in "building round this younger generation a society, or rather a hierarchy of societies, resting on civilised principles"?

As a schoolmaster (and *a fortiori* a teacher of history) I must regretfully say that Mr. Brailsford's suggestion that "a teacher with a class of senior lads to instruct . . . would help them to analyse this ill-written book (*Mein Kampf*) till they perceived its insanity" strikes me as completely impracticable—among other things.

Finally, may I assure Mr. Brailsford that when he says "these planners have thought too narrowly about education" he is wrong. It may quite well be that

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they have thought too widely, and realised the depth and the urgency of the problem only too well. The fact is that the more one knows about Nazi " education " the more one realises this urgency, and the less disposed to accept the possibility of any such gradual re-education as a true educationist would hope might be possible. We—the planners—may be quite as convinced as Mr. Brailsford of the reality, the primary importance, indeed, of the spiritual foundations of education—and of reconstruction, but the whole situation is one quite out of the range of such doctrinaire thinking as he applies to it. The time for that will, we hope, some day come; but the disease must be treated first. F. H. DOUGHTY

113 Fishponds Road,
Upper Tooting, S.W.17.

[Mr. Brailsford writes: Mr. Doughty is ignoring the difference between national and party distinctions. Doubtless if a revolutionary Germany were to carry out a purge of teachers, those dismissed might be regarded as martyrs who had suffered at the hands of the German Left. But they would not be national martyrs nor would they be regarded as the victims of the enemy. Mr. Doughty misunderstands the proposal to ferret out standard Nazi books. This means that a search will be carried out in every German home, not so much for school books as for political books addressed to adults.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

SIR,—Mr. Brailsford ably criticises the Vice-President of the U.S.A., who would have us re-educate German and Japanese youth. But, significantly, he makes no mention of Japan.

Perhaps he refrains from arguing that Japanese youth should be re-educated by Japanese liberals because he knows there would not be enough Japanese liberals to do the job.

Presumably, therefore, the victorious United Nations should not interfere with the glorification of Hirohito's military despotism and Matsui's economic slavery? JEFFREY TRUBY

A MODEL FOR THE WORLD

SIR,—Some readers of the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION will greet the announcement that the Colonial Office has set up 15 Labour Advisory Boards for the Crown Colonies (including N. Rhodesia, Nyassaland, Tanganyika and Uganda) as a vindication of the plea put forward by the Home Secretary. The burden of Mr. Morrison's speech was that Whitehall generally moves forward in matters of colonial policy, when it moves at all. Any moral comfort we might be tempted to draw from this assertion depends on what answer we give to two other questions. Will the post-war settlement contract the terrain within which Whitehall is free to move forward when it does move; and (if so) who will be the arbiters of native policy in territories no longer under Whitehall control?

By a happy coincidence the theme of Mr. Morrison's speech was that of recent utterances by Mr. Wendell Willkie; but if Mr. Morrison's defence of the old imperialism was intended to put out of countenance democrats who survive in this hemisphere to welcome Mr. Willkie's misgivings, his masterly reticence defeated his aim. That he did not attempt to answer the questions stated above merely adds a touch of comic relief to the outbreak of national self-righteousness recently prompted by the *affaire Darlan*. While the happily defunct admiral was still a convenient theme for the moral indignation of our fellow islanders, the American case was wholly consistent with British practice. If you grant the proposition that the United Nations need every procurable military ally to defeat the Axis, you have to forgo the ethical luxury of being squeamish about past flirtations with the Nazi regime. Put the word *creed* for *regime* in the last sentence, and you have a bald statement of our policy throughout all the African campaigns.

From the start, the Union of South Africa has been Britain's ally. Five years before Hitler came into power the Union of South Africa embarked on a native policy to give effect to the master race doctrine. It has not merely been a policy of stagnation. The case of its critics is not merely that it has failed to provide educational facilities or political self-expression for the overwhelming majority of the population. It has reinforced the statutory colour bar to skilled employment. It has taken away the vote and the right to direct representation from natives who formerly had it. It has made interracial marriage a criminal offence. It has limited the native's freedom to choose his own employer by imposition of new hardships. It has deprived the native population of the right to free assembly previously enjoyed by them.

Admittedly our professional indignationists had a plausible enough case while the *affaire Darlan* was in the public eye; but, like that of those they attacked, it was a case with symmetrical implications. If they had good cause for uneasiness about the commitments into which military expediency had forced our American allies, those of us, not yet blinded to the beam in Bulawayo by too protracted peering in the mote of Massachusetts, are entitled to be a little curious about what price we pay for conformity to the dictates of military expediency in an earlier stage of the African campaign. After the last world war, the Union of South Africa acquired a substantial slab of mandated territory as a playground for the master race game. Will its demands be more modest this time?

One may put the same question in a more positive shape: just how much of the African Continent is already mortgaged to the chromatocracies of S. Africa and S. Rhodesia? Those of us who have lived in S. Africa and those of us who have contacts with public opinion (white) or private opinion (black) in that Dominion have no doubts about the correct answer to the first and little with regard to the second. If discretion endorsed an honest discussion of the issue, some who now fulminate against the State Department and take umbrage at every salutary criticism of our own shortcomings in the American press might be less vocal. On the other hand, they might not. There are too many signs that we are fast losing the self-assurance which tolerates self criticism.

LANCELOT HOGBEN

ELECTRICITY IN THE HIGHLANDS

SIR,—May I add a footnote to Mr. Mather's admirable letter on the Scottish Hydro-Electric Scheme? It is true that the development of Highland water-power has been a " festering sore " in our Scottish national life for years; and it is a public scandal of the first order that nothing has yet been done to deal with it, and that in this respect (as in many others) we should be behind almost every country in Europe.

The nearest approach to successful action in the past was the Caledonian Power Scheme. I was in charge of that Bill on two occasions in the House of Commons, and I should like, if I may, to quote my concluding remarks in the debate on March 10th, 1937: " The decision is between Corpach and Norway If this Bill is rejected it will mean the loss of a new industry (hydro-electricity) in a part of Scotland which most desperately needs it. It will destroy the hopes of those of us who see the possibilities of future development which might, even at this eleventh hour, save the North of Scotland from being not only a depressed area but a derelict area. It will deprive the country of a safe source of supplies of carbide which are necessary on strategic and national grounds . Those who know the tragedy that underlies the position in the North of Scotland will not willingly contemplate such a disaster."

The Bill was rejected by an unholy alliance between the sporting landlords, the Welsh miners' representatives, and a number of labour members who would rather await the Socialist millenium than permit any development of our national resources under the auspices of private enterprise.

A substantial majority of Scottish members voted for it. Had it been passed, we should to-day have been manufacturing in the country the *whole* of our requirements of calcium carbide—one of the most vital of war commodities.

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Is it too much to hope that we have now learnt our lesson, and that the fatal combination of vested interests and cranks will no longer be allowed to sabotage indefinitely the development of our native land? The Coöper Scheme is probably the last chance of saving the Highlands in this generation. And it most certainly commands the enthusiastic support of a majority of the affected population. It is not sacrosanct, and can be altered if necessary to meet the requirements of the post-war era. But the immediate issue, as I see it, lies between belated action and total impotence. I am in favour of action. ROBERT BOOTHBY

House of Commons.

SIR,—May I add three considerations to the discussion of the Cooper Report in your columns?

(1) Surely to discuss industrial reconstruction in Scotland as an off-shoot of a hydro-electric scheme is the reverse of the logical order. In fact the fear behind the controversy is that the existing interests, thinking in narrow terms, will consolidate in a position which will dictate the form of any post-war planning in the Highlands. The demand for greater public control than the Cooper Report gives is not based only on public as against private interest, but on the need for a long-term plan as against a series of short-term plans. The real answer to the Cooper Report is a commission to set out the broad lines of Scottish industrial development after the war to which the hydro-electric schemes must conform.

(2) The war has not left the Highlands untouched, yet the Report ignores the war developments. It is common knowledge that there are new and enlarged air and sea ports in the North Highland area which it would be uneconomical to neglect in peacetime. The area is on the air route to North America, a factor which will help its economic development.

(3) Finally the decision on this matter will be an example to the world of how we are likely to develop ourselves after the war. Post-war schemes for Europe speak of parallels to the T.V.A., and the development of Norwegian and Swiss water-power for the Continent under some form of international control. The same principles must apply to the Scottish scheme; if we intend to ask the restored nations of Europe to subordinate private interest to the public need, an example must be set at home. Neither in its immediate propaganda effect, nor in its future promise is the Cooper Report an industrial equivalent of the Beveridge Report. Yet there is no reason why Mr. Wallace's world of the common man should not begin to take shape in the Scottish Highlands. RANGEFINDER

Liverpool.

MIHAILOVITCH AND THE PARTISANS

SIR,—In your issue of January 9th, 1943, you say: "Although no official reference is made to the disturbing reports about General Mihailovitch which have been published in the press, it seems probable that this rather than the need to reduce the number of Ministries is behind the reshuffle." This surmise is incorrect.

I write, however, not only to correct this impression, but also to draw your attention to the unfortunate tendency revealed by irresponsible comment in the "disturbing reports" to which you refer. The press in Great Britain is at full liberty to comment as it pleases on political issues—with or without official confirmation. The pity of it is that when no official statement or explanation is forthcoming, for one reason or another best known to the Government concerned, a torrent of speculations is let loose, more often than not of a sensational kind, and this at a critical juncture of the war, in which Yugoslavia at great sacrifice is playing a serious part, can only help the Axis.

If my Government, in common with other Governments, does not issue to the press the whys and wherefores of any changes it may see fit to make, there is surely nothing more to be said. But in relation to the charge made in your article and quoted above, I submit one or two points for your consideration.

With a popular revolt growing all over a country a little larger in size than Great Britain, divided by natural barriers and varying local traditions, and at this moment dismembered and partitioned by the Axis into twelve parts, would it be reasonable to expect a neatly unified command? Is it not rather a matter of wonder that there should be so few different groups in Yugoslavia fighting the Axis? To suggest that the forces under Mihailovitch and the other local groups of "partisans" are fighting each other, and not the Axis, is pure enemy propaganda. To counter it, we can quote from enemy lips. The *ustasha* Commander Sholtz, in a recent broadcast, said these words: "These Yugoslav patriots in Herzegovina, Bosnia, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia and Montenegro, are under one High Command, with an agreed goal, tactics and strategy . . . This is best proved by the fact that these gangs of criminals behave in the same way also outside the Croat borders, in Serbia, Slovenia, the Voivodina, Montenegro . . ." V. VILDER,

Royal Yugoslav Government, *Director.*
Information Department.

[We see no reason to modify anything we have said about the very complex situation in Yugoslavia. We hope shortly to publish a more detailed article on the subject.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

THE BOOKSELLER

SIR,—"I come to bury bookselling, not to praise it," should, I thought, have been the theme of Professor Laski's generous tribute to our calling. For the fact is that the present indiscriminate policy of the Ministry of Labour, which is transferring booksellers (men up to 45 and women up to 35) without regard to their skill or value to the community will, unless immediate action is taken, put a number of small bookselling businesses out of action altogether, while larger firms will, in many cases, be paralysed, being prevented from giving the skilled service in which lies their value.

Far too little is known of the bookselling business or of the years of experience needed to gather the requisite knowledge of the changing hosts of books, new and old, in and out of print, only through possession of which can the bookseller advise his customers, judge which new books to buy and how many, and when to re-order—functions which require also an encyclopaedic knowledge of his clientele and of the present chaotic conditions of production; together with a sort of intuitive judgment as to the duration of demand for the particular book.

In bookshops up and down the land, of varying size and quality (and there are a number, unfamiliar to "Bookbuyer," of which he would approve) men and women are struggling to carry on, bereft of all experienced assistance. Now these people themselves are, in many cases, to be called. There is to be no exemption except under a hardship clause which can apply only to one-man businesses.

To my mind this is absolutely wicked. Never has there been such a demand for books from all ranks, classes and ages. For the youngsters and the Home Guard the bookseller carries hundreds of technical and instructional books for every aspect of mechanised war; into his shop they pour *asking for his advice.* With them come their wives and mothers, wanting books for presents, for prisoners and for themselves.

For at last the people are turning to books and in this lies a hope for democracy. Politics, religion, popular philosophy, current history and popular science are the best-sellers of the day, and there is an amazing demand for poetry, art, drama, music and the ballet.

Now it is to be checked in full flood. Everywhere one hears of branch managers, or owners, called up with no redress; of shops about to close and employers at their wits' end as to how to carry on.

No bookshop can carry on without at least one qualified "key" assistant, or manager—in each shop or, in larger businesses, in each department. Surely that is not too much to concede to an industry which is officially scheduled as essential to the war effort?

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

Two years after Queen Victoria ascended the throne, in the discovery of photography an idea was brought to fruition that had its origin in the scientific researches of Leonardo da Vinci. At the beginning of the nineteenth century Thomas Wedgwood, of the family of potters, had produced silhouettes by placing lace, feathers and ferns on bits of paper coated with a solution of silver nitrate, known since the eighteenth century to be sensitive to light, and exposing them to the sun. But in 1839 Daguerre, the stage designer, experimenting in the unscientific atmosphere of an illusionist's workshop, and Fox Talbot, in his chemical laboratory at Laycock Abbey, unconscious of each other's existence, both completed their independent discoveries—the Frenchman taking a portrait on a single opaque plate, the other producing a paper negative from which a limitless number of positives would be duplicated. By the time the Queen died, photography had passed through its most glorious initial stage and was no longer the result of brilliant individual performances; indeed, it had almost attained the condition of industry and of decadence in which we find it to-day.

An unassuming little book * has recently been produced, which is a delightful history of the development of photography in its early days. It makes one wonder at the tenacity and patience of the pioneers when, to take a "sun picture," odds were so strongly against them. They had to battle with heavy, cumbersome, expensive apparatus, scornful or frightened sitters (mothers were anxious that their "off-spring" should not be harmed by the rays of the camera), to say nothing of disorders resultant from inhaling the fumes of mercury when preparing their equipment, for it was not until 1880 that factory-prepared plates and paper were available. When Roger Fenton went to photograph the Crimean war he carried with him thirty-six large chests of photographic paraphernalia. He took cameras of the bellows construction, each with many lenses, stocks of plate glass, chests of chemicals, gutta-percha baths, printing frames, carpenters' tools, a still stove, a travelling tent-dark-room, cisterns for distilled and ordinary water, and a harness for three horses. In the heat of the closed dark-room the difficulties and discomfort of coating a plate, and the other necessary preparations before his photography began, were accentuated by dust and flies. In this book Mr. Strasser includes entertaining anecdotes of the early days of the "black art," when amateurs placed animals in head-rests and other contraptions, and spent a year in tracking down, before the lens, the red deer in the park at Stoke, and constables had to protect the photographer erecting his tent in Trafalgar Square to "take" Landseer's lions. The description of an early sitting with a baby is identical to any that might take place to-day. Mr. Strasser describes in many amusing instances the desperate attempt of these early photographers to elevate their medium from becoming a merely technical process. Already in '69 Mr. Heath had discovered that if a group photograph is in the offing everyone covets the best position in the front looking straight at the camera, with an unnatural and formal result. For the garden party given by Lady Burdett-Coutts at Holly Lodge, it was announced on the invitation cards that Mr. Heath would take a photograph at 5.30. A bugle would sound to warn the guests to prepare for the exposure. At a second bugle call everyone must stay still; the third call would be the sign that the photograph was over. The excitement created by the first note of the bugle caused people to rush all over the lawn looking in vain for the camera, for Mr. Heath had taken up his vantage point hiding his camera in a near-by window, conveniently screened by "pendent ivy." At the second bugle call there was nothing for it but to stand still. In consequence the negatives were "artistic and satisfactory," for the chemistry was good, and "the bulk of those photographed had stood in natural attitudes." While the technical development of photography continued apace, the æsthetic essentials were being most rapidly realised, and in the early portraits of Oliver Hill, the Edinburgh portrait painter, who set about the task of photographing five hundred faces, later to be incorporated in an oil painting of the General Assembly, the zenith of photography was attained. In these perfectly balanced and composed photographs, so vibrantly lit with a Raeburnesque top lighting, portraiture reached a position since unsurpassed in England.

The earliest sitters sat for half an hour in strong sunlight. Later they were confined in a glass case while the photographer "arranged" the lighting system. Unlike the photographer of to-day, who attempts to portray his subject in a flat or "becoming" light, Hill's intention was to place his sitter in a light that showed to the fullest extent his features. The technical imperfections added a mysterious quality rather than detracted from the impressive effect of a picture. The essential and elementary rules were learnt which still apply to-day. It was discovered that light is a good servant, and a bad master. In 1865 Mr. Jabez Hughes lectured on light and lighting, and his dicta can be applied to-day: "A well-lighted picture is one where the light falls chiefly in one direction, so as to form well-defined shadows, then a secondary should be attempted just strong enough to light the shadows. . . ." "The principal light should come in such an oblique direction as to be partly from the top, partly from the side, and partly in advance of the sitter. I think there should be an eternal struggle between the two for mastery, but one must always predominate and govern, not rudely or violently, but gently and sweetly. Shall we be poetical and say the principal light must be masculine and vigorous, and the second one be soft and feminine, so that the effect of the unison is such a happy blending of light and shadows, with myriads of connecting half tones, that you cannot tell where one ends and the other begins, where each is present to strengthen and beautify the other—like two souls wedded in perfect harmony."

Almost at its inception the cry went up that is still heard to-day: "Can photography be an art?" The arguments as to whether an individual can assert his own personal point of view over the camera and break away from the mere reproduction of nature have not since ceased. Rejlander was among the earliest who were determined to attempt to make a technical process become the means of manifesting the spirit, and concocted a jig-saw puzzle photograph, or montage, using thirty different negatives for the composite print: "Two Ways of Life," which, when shown to the public, was merely regarded as indelicate, for it was said that photography was not suitable for "that sort of thing." Mrs. Cameron rushed about the house draping her friends in sheets, in imitation of the Pre-Raphaelites, producing some rather absurd, also some immortal, photographs of which the exquisite "Alice" is reproduced in this volume. Later, photographs were spuriously made to look like any "old paintings" or engravings, by the unpleasing expedient of using oil and bromoil processes with pigmented papers, and it was considered possible by various similar tricks to resemble any style of painting "from the old Dutch School to the Pointillists." But although some enthusiastic photographers donned tam-o'-shanters and velveteen coats, they were not considered artists by the Impressionists or Expressionists, who denied the camera the powers of "creating inner experience in terms of the pictorial," and the photographers, by being considered "technicians," and being denied the "distinction" of being artists, like any governess that went out with her sketch pad and tussore parasol, came to suffer from an inferiority complex.

The rise of the Middle Classes, the widening of people's interests, the trend towards mass production in industry, and rationalisation of all processes in the Victorian era, produced the desire for the incursion of the mechanical even into the realms of art. Thus the invention of lithography and photography can be considered symptoms of that dawning technical age when every effort was made towards uniting technical and artistic creation. Photography democratised the heretofore limited art of creating pictures, and enlarged picture-making from a manual to a mechanical process. Technical improvements in the camera have resulted in the lens seeing more than the human eye. This has led to the artificialities of over-retouching and a tendency to place the sitter in a light that does not reveal too much.

Goethe said: "In the end, of course, it is through the spirit that technique becomes alive." To-day, nevertheless, only a few people look upon photography as something other than a wholly inferior mechanical process. It is still regarded with a certain stigma—no doubt because the ambition of most photographers is commercial and an occasional masterpiece of photography can be obtained by a "fluke." With the advent of miniature and fast lens cameras, photography has entered into new realms, leaving Victorian photography as a perfect closed chapter. Modern photography is a subject with its own peculiar laws. Its concepts must be clarified and its limits defined.

The illustrations in this book include engravings of new inventions of the '50s, the neck rests, the disguised camera, the folding changing bags, as well as some of the loveliest photographs ever taken, though some of the pictures are not well chosen. The Hill examples of soldiers and sailors are unworthy of that great master's reputation. There are too many merely commercial portraits, too great an insistence on the picturesque, such as "In a Garden Fair," made in '97, "A New Pet," and the "Norfolk Haymaker," and too large a proportion is given to Mr. Coburn's bogus lithographs. I miss the inclusion of any flower composition, or still lifes, or of even one *carte de visite* by Mr. Silvy, the exquisite photographer from Porchester Terrace in the '60s.

It is difficult to dissociate one's judgment from the spell of nostalgia when admiring these photographs, and it is easy to forget how much more conducive to romantic and compact compositions were the costumes of these earliest sitters than those of to-day. Nevertheless, one is shamed by this slim volume into realising how small an advance, both technically and spiritually, has been made since the last plate in this book—a heavily retouched photograph of Queen Victoria crocheting—and that the differences in the ensuing stages of photography show little more than changes of fashion. CECIL BEATON

WHITHER NOW?

God and Evil. By C. E. M. JOAD. *Faber and Faber* 8*s*. 6*d*.

On the last page of his new book, Dr. Joad says that he is now ready "to bank on the religious hypothesis being true," and he concludes:

> If the religious view of the universe is true, if, that is, the universe has a meaning and a purpose, this life is not all, and something probably survives the break up of our bodies. Indeed, unless there is more abundant life before mankind, this world of material things is a bad joke beyond our understanding, a vulgar laugh braying across the mysteries.

With his accustomed clarity and candour, with appealing sincerity and sometimes with unexpected naivety, Dr. Joad records his journey from complete scepticism to "the positive side of agnosticism." It may well be that he has not come to his journey's end. It is of great interest that he should have got so far.

But the passage, that I have quoted, suggests that the acceptance that the universe has meaning and a purpose, determined by a personal God, and that the individual spiritual life continues after the life of the body has come to an end is compelled by the fact that man's earthly life, with its short span of experience, is no more than a bad joke. This is directly contrary to the Christian revelation that Dr. Joad still finds unacceptable. When "the Word was made flesh," the flesh was made sacred. In a rather queer sentence, Dr. Joad says that God created us, "created, that is to say, our souls." But the Christian religion, as Dr. Temple has said, the most materialistic of all the great world religions, emphasises that the Creator is vastly concerned with man's earthly welfare, and that he is meant to enjoy his earthly life. In the declaration "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends," there is the implication that his earthly life is man's most valuable possession. In the General Thanksgiving in the Book of Common Prayer is the sentence, "We thank Thee for our creation, preservation and all the blessings of this life." And again the implication is that life is meant to be not a bad joke but a great adventure, and because he believes in the Incarnation, the Christian Socialist believes that life might be a great adventure for all men.

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* Victorian Photography. By Alex. Strasser. *Focal Press*. 13*s*. 6*d*.

Dr. Joad finds the claim that Christ was divine "unplausible." It has to be recognised that what one man finds plausible another finds unplausible, and it has always seemed to me equally absurd for the believer to shudder at the sceptic as for the sceptic to sneer at the believer.

With all the inventions and discoveries, the mysteries remain and belief is not always dependent on knowledge. George Saintsbury wrote: "*Credo quia impossibile* may be an exaggeration, but *non discredo* (if there were such a word, as there might be) *quia impossibile* is not unreasonable at all—it is merely the acknowledgment of the difference between Belief and Knowledge."

Dr. Joad grants the existence of a personal God, but he is careful to make it clear that he has no definite idea of the character of God. To the Christian that nature is completely revealed in the earthly life of Christ. The mystic may have, as Dr. Joad admits, intimate contacts with the divine. But there have never been many mystics in any generation, and the common natural man cannot have any real belief in a Being who is only a vague abstraction. The revelation, therefore, which, so it is affirmed, was the intention of the Incarnation was necessary if there were to be any possible intimacy between the Creator and the common run of the created. Following Claud Montefiore, Dr. Joad finds flaws in the character of Christ. No professing Christian can attempt any answer to such suggestions because of his awe for the Great Figure, whose life, Dr. Inge says in his *God and the Astronomers*, was "full of the purest affection, the most dauntless intellectual sincerity and the simple love of all things right and beautiful." But, though he finds imperfections, Dr. Joad admits that He was "perhaps the best man who ever lived."

But that is not enough. It is not enough that He was godlike as St. Francis was godlike. The whole meaning of the revelation is lost unless Christ was "perfect man and perfect God."

Dr. Joad devotes many pages to the consideration of the old problem of reconciling the persistence of evil with the existence of a benevolent and omnipotent Deity. It is to be regretted that he has not given as much attention to Dr. Temple's *Nature, God and Man* as he has to C. S. Lewis's *The Problem of Pain*, but no one can deny that this is one of the greater mysteries, never, I think, to be understood and only to be tolerable with the conviction that in the never-ceasing contest between good and evil, good will eventually triumph. This conviction is justified not only by faith in the supernatural but by the abounding goodness and beauty in the natural. It is difficult to avoid the personal in writing of so personal a book, and for me belief in a good God is strengthened by the fact that, with all the wickedness in high places, I find so much goodness and charm in my fellows.

In one or two comparatively small matters Dr. Joad is out of date. He appears to think that the Christian Church holds the Augustine-Calvin-Jansenist doctrine of predestination, but Calvinism was practically killed in England by Wesley.

He is troubled, too, by a misreading of the creed wrongly attributed to St. Athanasius. In that creed the summary of the Catholic faith is followed by the declaration "which except a man believe faithfully he cannot be saved." But belief is not by itself the guarantee of salvation. St. James wrote: "But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead."

And it is necessary to have a clear idea of what is implied by salvation and damnation. Outside the Roman Church and the thin ranks of the fundamentalists, belief in eternal punishment, repudiated by the Archbishop, has ceased to make religion horrible. It is not even taught in the Athanasian Creed. As Saintsbury has pointed out, according to this creed, a person goes into Everlasting Life to live everlastingly or into Everlasting Fire, where he may be burnt up immediately. Life is a state, fire is not.

God and Evil is a book that compels thought, challenges disagreement and excites admiration. Its readers will await with proper eagerness the record of the next stage in Dr. Joad's spiritual pilgrimage.

Sidney Dark

THE GENTEEL TRADITION

The United States and Civilisation. By John U. Nef. *Cambridge* (for *Chicago University Press.*) 18s.

Shortly before the war, the American public was amused one day to read a passionate denunciation of the University of Chicago by a millionaire proprietor of chemists' shops. It appeared that his niece was a student of that institution, and he was greatly disturbed by the starkly liberal opinions she was imbibing in the classrooms. He felt strongly upon the matter; and, quite shortly thereafter, the Hearst press was out on one of those witch-hunting exploits which suggest that American university professors have taken the place of the theological antinomians of the seventeenth century, with men like Mr. Hearst and Colonel McCormick, among the newspaper owners, and Mr. Westbrook Pegler, among the columnists, seeking to qualify for the role of Cotton Mother. But the President of Chicago, Mr. Robert Hutchins, is an able and ingenious person. After discussions of which it is regrettable that no stenographic record is available, the irate millionaire was persuaded to set up a foundation in the University "to foster an intelligent citizenship and patriotism, not narrowly nationalistic in their expression, and with thought and knowledge much more than emotion as their foundation." Professor Nef's book is a course of lectures given on this foundation.

It is a curiously interesting, even revealing book. Professor Nef is well known to British scholars as an economic historian of great learning and remarkable energy. He has read very widely, and he has been deeply influenced by a number of writers who vary from Maritain and President Hutchins to Professor Tawney and Thorstein Veblen. Out of it all, there emerges a solid, if rather discursive essay, in what Santayana has called "the genteel tradition." There is about it all the rather wistful air of a Boston Indian Summer, the zeal for culture, the anxiety that art should be fully understood as important, the yearning that universities should teach their students the glory of the great writers, the insistence that it is better for a student of politics to be familiar with Plato and Aristotle, Bodin and Montesquieu, rather than with the details of public utility administration, or the ward boss and his technique, or the implications of the Labour injunction. In research the "time has come not to stop gathering materials but to gather them more intelligently and for purposes determined by moral philosophy . . . for serious synthesis like those of Pirenne, Rostovtzeff and McIlwain." Students are "almost wholly devoid of a sense of intellectual and artistic values"; Professor Nef felt this strongly when his listeners in a course on English history seemed to resent his statement that Shakespeare was the greatest of all English writers. What kind of an America, Professor Nef reflects, is being built when a lady at dinner asks her cultivated partner whether *Moby Dick* is one of the season's best sellers? What kind of a religion is being built there when the American press judges a Protestant clergyman not by his view of original sin or the Divinity of Christ, but by the number of people he can bring to church? Why not endow the churches to relieve them from the need to compete with secular amusements and thus free them to contribute "to the restoration of faith and the cultivation of the virtues for which Christ lived and died"? Why not endow the arts and crafts so that America could gradually be rebuilt "on aesthetic principles"? Democracy must be revived, not by an alteration in its vested procedures, but by begetting in its youth a passion for righteousness; and libel laws should make it possible to punish anyone who spreads lies about American statesmen in print or on the platform. Only by a rebirth of the human spirit does Professor Nef think that America can be saved.

At the bottom of Professor Nef's mind there is a number of concepts each of which is the more interesting because he is only half-conscious, if at all conscious, of its significance. He is afraid of the masses. Somewhere or other there is a body of absolute values which must be imposed upon them by leaders. These values are discovered by great artists, thinkers, scholars, who brood contemplatively in a select number of ivory towers (of which the University of Chicago is happily one) where, properly endowed, they can see the significance of first principles remote from the mean struggle for daily bread. Once they are endowed, once they can instil the passion for righteousness instead of the ardour for money-making into American youth, private enterprise can be left much as it is, and the American Constitution can move serenely and majestically upon its way. No one will resent the priority of Shakespeare; novelists' wives will react almost instinctively to the proposition that *Moby Dick* is more important than *Gone With the Wind*; and the statesman will have learned that he will do better to devote most of the time to Plato and Aristotle, "even to Dante and Shakespeare," that he now gives to telegrams from his constituents and to the newspapers and the magazines. A new America will emerge rather like, I fear, a pale wraith of the Boston of the mid-nineteenth century, proudly ready, like Margaret Fuller, to "accept the universe," but content to do so because it has remoulded it to the pattern of its own image of culture and righteousness. I suspect that it will replace Franklin and Jefferson and Lincoln by Thomas Aquinas, Jacques Maritain and President R. M. Hutchins. But I infer that there will always be a room—though I suspect that it will be in a side-room in a wing—where a brief visit to Professor R. H. Tawney may be paid.

It does not seem to occur to Professor Nef that the men who are to endow his great leaders are the men who have so largely shaped the things in American civilisation of which he is so fearful; still less that, on his own assumptions, they will be the government of the United States—the disinterested arbiter which protects the right of the teacher to instil in his students the passion for righteousness and truth. But at least the millionaire whose foundation made these lectures possible ought to derive great comfort from it. For when all its learning and earnestness have been stripped away, and its central thesis set out apart from the massive exhortation which surrounds them, it will leave his millions to the millionaire; and he is not unlikely to reflect that, in future societies as in those of the past, the man who pays the piper will retain a fair chance of calling the tune.

Harold J. Laski

THE FAITH OF A PACIFIST

The Right to Live. Essays by MAX PLOWMAN. *Dakers.* *7s. 6d.*

These essays contain the distillation of a life which combined action with earnest thinking, They are a sincere and far-seeing, though not, I think, a comprehensive, expression of the truth which our age is painfully rediscovering ; namely, that no amount of political and social reconstruction can create a wholesome society unless it is accompanied by a widespread quickening of consciousness about fundamental values. But rich as this book is in vision, I cannot help feeling that the very intensity of Plowman's perception of the light dazzled him, partially blinded him to certain ugly and recalcitrant facts which the light can indeed illuminate but cannot abolish. He underestimates the frailty and positive evil will of a damaged mankind. Not that our troubles are incurable ; merely that I doubt whether ordinary warped human beings in a perverted society can cure them by the heroic measures that the pacifist demands.

The essays range from 1917 to 1941. They mostly deal with pacifism, religion, Blake, D. H. Lawrence, Shakespeare's plays. They are all really concerned with different aspects of the one great theme, the awakening of consciousness. The study of Hamlet is an outstandingly brilliant and convincing analysis of the play as a drama of the self-conscious spirit confronted with outrageous fortune and wrestling for integrity.

Mr. Middleton Murry in his introduction points out that Plowman was deeply influenced by two crucial experiences. As a sub-lieutenant on the Somme in 1917 he " discovered life." He had a sudden overwhelming revelation that modern warfare was utterly wrong and useless, and he decided that, no matter what the consequences to himself, he must leave the army. Plowman saw, however, that mere " war-resistance " was not enough. Modern war was the inevitable consequence of a capitalistic social structure and a materialistic culture. Therefore pacifists must devote themselves actively to the task of revolutionising both society and culture. But the essential revolution must take place in men's hearts, must be a quickening of the individual consciousness. Capitalism led to disaster because it blinded men to the essential values of " life." Further it was based on the false assumption that the only effective motive of human conduct was self-preservation ; whereas " the primary law of our life is that we shall be dependent for our lives on the love of others." Here, surely, is a great truth marred by over-simplification. Love is indeed a powerful factor, and one which we urgently need to re-emphasise ; but to call it the " primary law " is to play into the hands of cynical critics. Plowman's pacifism, too, though springing from his true and life-giving vision, seems to me an over-simplification. Though peace is to be established only by a revolution in men's hearts, along with a radical economic change, yet, so long as capitalism, armaments and triumphant gangsterism do exist, violence must in the last resort be met with violence. Doubtless it is our fault that gangsters have triumphed ; but there they are, doing incalculable physical and spiritual hurt. We must, alas, attack them, in order to succour tortured populations and prevent the further degradation of a world.

Plowman's second crucial experience came to him through the loss of a child " who contained the whole meaning and expression of life." In this overwhelming sorrow he " discovered death."

In a striking essay he affirms that death is to be realised only in the death of the beloved. Indifference to death he regards as a mere pose that is shattered when we are faced with the seeming annihilation of the beloved. But in this experience of losing our treasure we may find a whole new world, " and in it our treasure." " Another world opens, a very still, very silent world, without time and space, but a world of such intense reality that it makes the old world look like a bubble." Is this a literally true report of Plowman's experience, or is it a poetic over-interpretation of something essentially *un*-interpretable but nevertheless life-giving, an experience of joyful but mute acceptance of the universe with all its glory and tragedy ? Impossible to say ! But the essay is a noble one, repaying close study.

I cannot without qualification follow Plowman in the theoretical conclusions which he draws from his two great experiences. Combined with his reading of poetry, they lead him to make a very sharp distinction between the world of mere " fact " and the world of " truth." " Fact " is all that occurs in time and is grasped by the analytical intellect. " Truth " is eternal and is revealed to the " heart," to the more awakened consciousness, through the exercise of poetic imagination and religious perception. Thus " God exists in truth ; but He is not a fact." Plowman's magnificent protest against materialism and arid intellectualism leads him to allow to fact only a shadowy kind of existence, subordinate to the " truth " of imagination. But both heart and head must have their due. There is really no conflict between them save when one encroaches on the other's territory. Arid intellectualism is indeed heartless, and fundamentally *unreasonable* ; but the heart, uncriticised, runs to extravagance, and is fundamentally untrue even to its own virtue of sincere feeling.

I have criticised freely, and perhaps with insufficient insight, a book which I believe to be in essence true and of great value. Plowman himself would have preferred sympathetic criticism to facile praise.

OLAF STAPLEDON

BEAUTY AND DISCOMFORT

The Gobi Desert. By MILDRED CABLE with FRANCESCA FRENCH. *Hodder and Stoughton.* *21s.*

The majority of travel-books about the more inaccessible places of the earth are the fruit of a single visit : the traveller has been interested, he has been fascinated perhaps ; he feels an understandable pride in his enterprise and adventure ; he feels a natural desire to share his experiences with other people, and may also reflect that such publication will bring him a little legitimate profit. This generalisation does not apply to the book under review. Miss Cable had already spent twenty years of her life in the Shansi province of Northern China when, with her companions Eva and Francesca French, she began to carry medicines and the Gospel into that formidable and desolate region known as the Gobi Desert, which extends for 1,200 miles from north to south and for 2,000 miles from east to west, or for 3,600 miles if you choose to reckon it from the foot of the Pamirs to the borders of Manchuria. Miss Cable does not state how many years they spent in travelling both the old trade-routes (which she pleasingly calls the highways, as though anything so comfortable and convenient as a highway according to European ideas could exist in such a place), and the lesser tracks which took them into almost unvisited places, but it is implicit in her text that they came and went freely and frequently, lingering at the same oases many times in different seasons, and meeting many desert acquaintances over and over again in their journeyings. They wore Chinese dress ; they spoke and wrote Chinese, and, I surmise, a good many other local languages as well ; they were conversant with the etiquette of the nomad tent-dweller ; and, most important of all from the point of view of the reader, their long familiarity freed them entirely from the exasperating sentimentality which so frequently attacks those who have felt the lure of the desert, the lure of the

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RIDER

East. This does not mean that the author was not sensible of the soul-cleansing properties of desert life; it means merely that she tempers the rich fruition it brought to her with a welcome sense of realities.

The Gobi Desert must possess one of the most unpleasant climates on earth. The traveller seems to divide his time between cowering behind his camel in order to escape the raging wind and concomitant sand-storms, and cowering beneath his cart in order to escape the torrid sun. In the intervals he must struggle forward across waterless wastes, knowing that if he does not make the stage within the prescribed time he will perish as so many others have perished. But there are compensations. Certain passages in Miss Cable's book made me resolve to hurry off to the Western Gate of the Great Wall of China as soon as peace permitted one to indulge one's nostalgia for "abroad," even though other passages came as a complete disillusionment. The bits that made me fret to go were the accounts of some oases: the summer palace of the King of the Gobi at Aratäm; the Lake of the Crescent Moon; the decorated caves of the Thousand Buddhas; the ruins of the dead desert towns, where human life once flourished but has long since departed with the drying-up of the water; the Central Asian Ephesus; the village of the Moslem Tomb, which provides the only sand suitable for the polishing of jade. I should like to see also the stones of the Gobi flooring ("the narrow, faint path passes through a litter of small multi-coloured pebbles, which are rose-pink pistachio-green, tender peach, lilac, white, sealing-wax red and black burnished by sand, mixed with a quantity of orange-tinted cornelian") and should like to see the moon who "never pretends to be merely a silver sickle . . . but shows her full-orbed sphere, with a varying portion of brilliance outlining her darkened luminosity." It is tantalising to have to allude so briefly to these jewels of suggestion, but those who want to enjoy the occasional delights of the Gobi vicariously without suffering its disadvantages, may be referred to Miss Cable's excellent book.

Not the least interesting part is the concluding chapters, including a first-hand account of that remarkable young man, Ma Chung-Ying, known as the Baby General, and of present conditions in the Gobi. "Lonely, silent, unmoved, Gobi had stood apart from the turmoil, but its isolation could not be maintained and a gang of technicians soon appeared among the oases. . . . A new era of Gobi life had begun."

V. SACKVILLE-WEST

PLAYING WITH FIGURES

A Short History of Labour Conditions under Industrial Capitalism. Vol. I. Great Britain and the Empire, 1750 to the Present Day. By JURGEN KUCZYNSKI. *Muller. 12s. 6d.*

Mr. Kuczynski's mind is divided between the scientist and the propagandist, and the result here is disastrous. He is a scientific statistician and his object as such in this volume is to deduce from statistics the changes in the conditions of life of the workers in Great Britain and the Empire from the beginning of the industrial revolution to the present day. He is therefore investigating a most important question: what has been the effect of capitalism upon the standard of living of the working classes. There are in his book many things and many statistics of great interest, and if he had dealt with them in his capacity of scientist, he would have produced a work of considerable value. Unfortunately he treats science as a mere mask for propaganda and the result is lamentable. It is all the more lamentable in our opinion, because in the main we share Mr. Kuczynski's views with regard to capitalism and its effect upon the workers and we are as firmly convinced as he is of the necessity for socialism. We go still further; we believe that a statistician of Mr. Kuczynski's knowledge and ability could make an absolutely damning case against capitalism by treating facts and figures with scrupulous integrity and objectivity, while his propagandist technique defeats his object unless his object is to rejoice the defenders of capitalism, depress any intelligent socialist, and convert only the ignorant or the party parrot. This kind of book seems to perform for politics the function which the Thibetan praying wheel does for religion, and is one more sign that in the twentieth century politics has usurped the place of religion—and is having the same appalling results upon the minds of many people.

We believe that the facts and figures which are the data used by Mr. Kuczynski could be used objectively and scientifically to prove that capitalism has been and must be a failure as the economic system of the twentieth-century society because it cannot "deliver the goods"; it can be shown to have failed to give to large numbers of the workers economic security and to even larger numbers prosperity, and it can be shown that that failure is inherent in the economic structure. It can also be proved that the causes of capitalist failure are not inherent in a socialist economy, and that therefore socialism can (we do not say must) provide for the mass of workers a standard of living impossible under modern capitalism. But this is not enough for Mr. Kuczynski, the propagandist. He wants to prove that people who "believe in slow reform within the capitalist system" are wrong and that a particular sect of revolutionary socialists are right. He seems to have convinced himself that, in order to achieve his object, he must demonstrate that the standard of living of the working class has not improved under capitalism, that on the contrary it has consistently deteriorated—and he uses statistics to prove to his own satisfaction that it has perpetually and universally deteriorated from 1750 to 1942 within the British Empire.

Mr. Kuczynski seems to us to make a double mistake. The scientific case against capitalism and for socialism would not be invalidated by the fact that the standard of living of the working classes had improved between 1750 and 1942 and it is quite unnecessary to prove that the standard has consistently deteriorated in order to establish that case. The crucial test is not the relative standards of living attained at different periods, but the actual standard attained and attainable by capitalism. His second mistake is his method of attempting to prove his thesis. His bias is so extreme, his habit of giving the benefit of every doubt to every figure which can possibly be manipulated in the desired direction, that any one who retains a few poor sparks of mental impartiality, even though he stands, as we do, on the same side of the social barricade as Mr. Kuczynski, is driven to despair and revulsion; in the end he begins to suspect, no doubt wrongly but inevitably, every statistic as just part of the ideological conjuror's bag of tricks.

Mr. Kuczynski first deals with Great Britain in the three periods 1750 to 1850, 1850 to 1900, and 1900 to the present day. He proves to his own satisfaction that the standard of living of the mass of the workers deteriorated in each of these periods. He then examines successively the statistics available for India, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, and in each case he claims to prove that the workers' standard of living was worse in 1938 than it was in 1750 and that, except for some rare and short intervals, has "continually declined" over the whole period. Mr. Kuczynski shows his lack of scientific objectivity in two ways. The first is accumulative; whatever the betting, the ball always falls into the red hole. If money wages show an increase, real wages, which have to be based upon a considerable amount of calculation and often approximate or weighted figures, almost always

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cancel this out and show a decrease. If real wages persist in showing an increase, Mr. Kuczynski will show that they really deteriorated owing to increased intensity of work. If the death rate of children under ten years declines, the statistics, he maintains, tell us nothing about the state of health of these children, and are therefore no evidence of improvement in conditions of life; but an increase in the death rate does tell us something about the children's health and is evidence of deterioration in conditions, because "it is extremely improbable that the state of health improves while the death rate increases." But his bias is shown in general as well as in particular. There is a considerable amount of evidence of a general nature contained in historical records, which include non-statistical books and the memories of the living, regarding the workers' standard of living throughout the period. If one considers contemporary accounts of such conditions in autobiographies, biographies, historical and sociological works, or novels, the evidence, it seems to me, is of a marked improvement in general conditions of life. The evidence of one's own memory points in the same direction. It extends in my own case to 50 years of life in London and south coast villages. It seems to me incontestable that the standard of living of the London worker and of the Sussex agricultural labourer, bad though it is to-day, is considerably better than it was in 1893. Mr. Kuczynski ignores such evidence, though the deductions which he draws from his statistics are incompatible with the facts. He ignores it apparently because he seems to believe, as we said above, quite wrongly, that such facts are incompatible with the socialist case against capitalism.

Leonard Woolf

IS THE DEVIL FRENCH?

The Devil in France. By Lion Feuchtwanger. *Hutchinson's.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Future biographers of Herr Feuchtwanger—I suppose there are bound to be some—may find this book useful. So may historians of that strange phenomenon of our times, the "refugee mentality." In all ages Germans have wished to live "wie Gott in Frankreich," but it was left to some of France's latter-day guests to curse the country which welcomed them for not affording them better protection against the Nazi devils who followed on their heels. Herr Feuchtwanger joins the ranks of these, on the whole, ungrateful guests. That he did indeed suffer hardships along with other internees (including, on his own admission, a good many Nazis and Fifth Columnists) is a fact. What is striking, however, is how little thought he gives to the sufferings of the French people in May and June 1940, the period covered by the major part of his story. The most ungracious thing about his book is perhaps its title, arresting but unjustified. The incarnation of the devil encountered by Herr Feuchtwanger in France was not the German airman machine-gunning civilians, but merely easy-going official French "je m'en foutisme," and what he calls "the French Fascists' hatred of German anti-Nazis." He gives no very convincing proof of having in fact personally encountered either. When he and fellow internees feared the Nazi army might reach down the Rhône as far as their camp at Les Mille, they asked to be moved, and the "je m'en foutiste" French authorities moved them within a few days, in mid-June 1940, when to provide a train for 2,000 German internees must have been a feat of organisation. Instances of kindness by French officials, and of the people's sympathy with the German anti-Nazis after the armistice was signed, are comparatively frequent in a book from which the tale of the author's escape has had to be left out—so that the story is unduly weighted on the darker side. Herr Feuchtwanger expects more sympathy than the average man on the grounds that he is, so he says, more "capable of experiencing" than most people. His money enabled him to alleviate the hardships of internment and to surround himself with paid personal attendants. His artistic and personal egotism is wearisome in the present circumstances, and his complaints will interest only those who forget, as he does, the infinitely more real sufferings of an invaded people.

Jerome Jenatton

ABROAD

Travels Without a Passport (2nd Series). By Henry Baerlin. *Muller.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Baerlein is not so well known a writer as he should be. His *Life of Heine* and the first volume of the *Travels* are full of excellent writing and observation. They recall the work of Cunningham Graham. This second "series" is well up to the level of the first and the photographs supplied by the exclusive News Agency are well worthy of the letterpress.

Mr. Baerlein travels, so to speak, from China to Peru and his knowledge of strange languages has stood him in good stead. As in the first volume, there is a mixture of short stories and essays. One of the most interesting is the account of Napoleon at Elba, where he was much happier than at St. Helena, and was joined by his mother. It is full of incidents; but the account of Napoleon's books is most interesting. A critic remarks: "Here are books on astronomy, architecture, geography, anatomy, botany, finance, the art of making brandy and, of course, the works of Vauban, the military engineer. Lighter literature is represented by Boccaccio, Rousseau, Montaigne, Madame de Sevigné and eleven volumes of translations from Fanny Burney. The other books translated from English are Young's Night Thoughts and Howard on Prisons. There are numerous books translated from Latin, such as Ovid, Tacitus, Virgil, Caesar, and Seneca. The works of Voltaire are cheek by jowl with those of La Fontaine; Plutarch is a neighbour of St. Augustine. 'If,' says one of his critics, 'instead of poring over Plutarch's Lives, Rollin's Ancient History, Marigny's History of the Arabs and such romantic tales, his reading had been Smith's Wealth of Nations, he might have avoided some of the mistakes in commercial policy which proved so disastrous.' What would this critic have said of the forty-one volumes of fairy-tales that are on the shelves at Porto Ferraio? But Napoleon, a positive and potentially a brutal force, was also a dreamer."

The author's account of Italian tyranny in the Island of Rhodes is worth reading, having regard to possible post-war settlements. This book is not quite so amusing as the first; but it sparkles with humour, and there is in the preface an account of the author bathing very early one morning in Dieppe in the nude and the police running away with his clothes. He hotly pursued them and found that they had taken away his clothes only in order to exact the sum of fifty centimes, which was the tariff on the part of the beach which he had chosen. "Some Pieces of Wood" is a fine story of Norway under German tyranny which has been made familiar by Mr. Felix Aylmer's reading in the B.B.C. programme.

The author rightly points out that to-day when it is impossible to travel there is some consolation to be gained from the retrospect of past travel and, anyhow, reading his book by the fire is more comfortable than the actual experience of the traveller.

E. S. P. Haynes

Britain Needs Books. By John Brophy. *National Book Council.* 1*s.* 3*d.*

Mr. Brophy is usually a lively writer—as he says himself here: "I detest writing which does not demand an alert response from the reader." In this booklet he is exceptionally dull and pedestrian; he does not seem to feel fully at ease in presenting a rather *too* comprehensive brief for the book trade. The value of books to our democracy and indeed to our whole cause does not need much demonstration. It is hardly necessary, for instance, to repeat in three different places the 30 per cent. export statistics, or in three other places the figures for the trade's annual turnover (about £10,000,000).

All this publisher insistence makes one vaguely uneasy. Surely everything is not *perfect* about this business, any more than any other. Books are, after all, a commerce as well as culture. Mr. Brophy, in acknowledging no criticism (even of the reviewer!) overstates an unchallengeable case. Books are our life blood—in the long run far more so than newspapers or films, or public meetings.

There are some interesting facts in *Britain Needs Books*, mainly in the appendices. One notes that 17,125 new books were published in 1937; 16,219 in 1938; 14,904 in 1939; 11,050 in 1940; and 7,581 in 1941. The type of book that has suffered least from the necessary cuts is "Sociology, Law, Politics," which comprised a twelfth of new titles in 1937, over a seventh in 1941. There is also an appendix containing Archibald MacLeish's moving address to American Publishers (May, 1942) on "A Free Man's Books." The National Book Council would have been well advised if, instead of spending 72 pages of this well-intentioned propaganda, they had stuck to the six superb pages of MacLeish, 4 pages of British

Company Meeting

MARTINS BANK

GREATER RESERVE STRENGTH

NO EXCESS PROFIT FROM WAR

Mr. F. A. Bates, chairman, in his statement on the accounts for 1942, issued to members of Martins Bank, says: The balance sheet again bears the impress of the change-over from the trading of peace to the concentrated production for total war. There are three noteworthy features of the year's figures. Deposits have increased by £9,736,000; Treasury deposit receipts are £18,500,000 more, and advances are down by £3,679,000, notwithstanding that the bank is giving help to contractors on war work.

The loss of remunerative advances has been offset by larger Treasury deposit receipts and investment in Government loans, but the small margin of profit earned, with increasing expenses, has resulted in the net profit being some £10,613 less than last year. Excess profits are not being made by the bank out of the war. If they were excessive the appropriate amount would be transferred to the Government by the operation of the excess profits tax.

Net profit is £576,634, a moderate figure considering the large assets employed, namely, £183,500,000. We have placed £100,000 to reserve fund, £50,000 to pensions reserve, and £100,000 to reserve for future contingencies. The bank's reserves are the outcome of more than a century's trading and, being typical of the system of British banking, illustrate why that system, with its other traditional methods, is unsurpassed. These accumulated reserves are not more than prudence dictates as being adequate to maintain the high standard set by our banks.

War Service: Lending to the State

The large amount (£108,148,000) lent to the Government by way of investments, Treasury deposit receipts and Treasury bills, together with advances to customers on war work and the bank's engagements in respect of credits given for the import of essential commodities, is a measure of the war service the bank is giving on the financial side. In other ways additional duties have been undertaken, one being the conduct of large numbers of clothing coupon accounts. The coming year and particularly "Wings for Victory" weeks will give everyone a further opportunity of lending to the State funds urgently needed to prosecute the war. An increasing effort is required in this direction to redouble the response to the appeal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

The banking system, constantly adapting itself to changing times, has been equal to all the demands of the war. British bankers through the centuries from the days of Sir Thomas Gresham, who worked on the very site of our Lombard Street office, can be judged by their record, and I cannot put it better than in the words of an eminent correspondent, who wrote recently that if there was one thing to which he clung in the present cataclysm it was the flawless integrity of the banks.

book facts from Brophy, and a 2-page memorandum of practical constructive proposals —none are offered; presumably they have some to make? The result would have been cheaper and thus more popular, more readable, more effective and (of course) more economical in paper, their main concern.

Old Galway. By M. D. O'SULLIVAN. *Heffer.* 18*s.*

Mrs. O'Sullivan is professor of history in University College, Galway. Her book covers the history of the town of Galway from its foundation as a military and commercial outpost of England in the reign of John to its conquest by Cromwell's government in 1656. It is a careful study with a full bibliography of MSS. and printed sources, and anyone whose interest in Galway will sustain him or her through 450 pages will find Mrs. O'Sullivan a clear if somewhat leisurely guide. Her material, in the hands of a shrewd essayist, would boil down to a telling illustration of what is apt to happen in four and a half centuries of gradually intensifying nationalism to a remote urban settlement of aliens.

Week-end Competitions

No. 677

Set by Samuel Smiles

Competitors are invited to submit imaginary extracts (not more than 150 words) from Boswell's account of a discussion with Dr. Johnson about the Sunday opening of theatres.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Monday, February 1st.

2 The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 674

Set by William Whitebait

Our advertisers of patent medicines seem to shout less than they did. What they need is a wonderful new disease, and competitors are asked to supply this, together with an advertisement of its cure. Limit of 150 words.

In future the prize money will be Four Guineas instead of two and a half guineas, to be divided according to the recommendation of the judge.

Report by William Whitebait

Do you suffer from Lung-Twang, Queuer's Neck, or Emption? Abnormality (98.5 per cent. of human lives are choked by)? Buttoxemia? Gastromonotony? Primps? The Dillydoubles? Do you invariably fidget and wriggle when in a sitting position, no matter what kind of chair, couch or other piece of furniture you use? Do you miss the air raids? Are you sore from collisions in the dark? Does your hand tremble when you draw your pay? Do your toe-nails grow to *unequal lengths?* Does breakfast seem tasteless because of thoughts of lunch? Do you fall asleep over the news? Have the Mortamins got you? Are you worried by a thick little fur spreading over face and hands?

These are a few of the new diseases and symptoms discovered by competitors. "I feel in perfect health!" introduces one of the more radical of those discoveries, made by Mr. D. W. Barker; "Then beware!" this advertisement goes on, "Doctors assert, and science has proved, there is no such thing as perfect health." On the whole diseases were more convincing than remedies; but perhaps that is inherent in the subject.

A first prize of two guineas goes to "Fox," a second prize of a guinea to "Quack," and third prizes of half a guinea each to P. C. Irwin and "First Year Sixth."

PRIZES

(1)

DO YOU BOUNCE?

In these days of scientific dieting and living on Ministry of Food recipes it is easy to suffer from Vitaminosis—an over-plus of vitamins—*without knowing it.*

> Do your friends shun you because of your abundant energy?
>
> Do you earn black looks from your workmates by your Stakhanovism?
>
> Do you take the dog for a walk or does the dog take you?

Vitamins are the A.B.C D. Powers which hurl their panzer divisions at your tranquillity, form pincer movements round your liver and sabotage your spleen.

That tasty salad contains lurking danger. Do you realise that if you ate a hundredweight of raw, shredded cabbage, your life would be in danger?

"VITANEUT" neutralises vitamins in ten seconds!

GET BACK TO PRE-WAR POISE.
Take "VITANEUT."
Ten drops a day keep vitamins at bay.
1s. 9d., at chemists.

("FOX")

(2)

WORRIED?—READ THIS.

To Boil & Fetch, Ltd.,
Charing Gallow,
Woe, Ulchester.

Feeling mucculent? Stiff in the carsals and metacarsals? Embulced tongue, relaxed thrumboles? Swollen luptics, jerky lumbella, shoddy juvicles? Do your nails curl, muscles prinkle? Moil at night, wake up with a throbble? You are almost certainly suffering from GLOIDS.

Waste no time! Write immediately for our free *confidential* booklet and diagnosis, prepared by a Harley Street Doctor. All enquiries treated in strict confidence. Write in sealed envelope, marked Dr. Y-(Gloids), Dept. C.3/2143z. ("QUACK")

(3)

THE SHRINKS.

One adult in ten has now become a victim to this latest scourge of our wartime civilisation. Men and women in the prime of life find their stature decreasing, their skin wizening, their toe-nails ceasing to grow, even inwards. Have *you* joined this stricken band? Do your children mistake you for their Grandparent? Do you secretly covet a bath chair? In fact, have you got that Shrinking Feeling?

For safe and certain cure take GLIBB'S GLAND GLOBULES. These little wonders, easily swallowed with any kind of alcohol, are carefully prepared in our own laboratories, after years of scientific research, from the thyroid glands of elephants, giraffes, hippopotami and other large animals; they gently and painlessly bring your stature back to normal—even larger, should you wish.

Let GLIBB'S GLAND GLOBULES stop the rot TO-DAY!
Look for the three G's on the box!
It's swell! You swell! All's well!

(P. C. IRWIN)

(4)

ARE YOU TROUBLED WITH TOWANBUCKITIS?

Do you feel yourself parodying, clerihewing, satirising, translating, imitating? Thousands are smitten with this disastrous disease each week-end. Take action now! Now is the time to stop yourself getting TOWANBUCKITIS. Do not become one of the back page boys. Get rid of that pseudonym!!

The cure for this ailment is as simple as it is inexpensive. For only 5s. 6d. (plus 3s. 11d. purchase tax) you can get post free the COMPOCUTTER, this simple, nicely-finished, sterile, chromium, guileless gadget, neatly cuts away the back page of your NEW STATESMAN, leaving no rough edges.

We assure applicants for the COMPOCUTTER that *absolute secrecy* will be maintained as to their identity. Send away now!!! ("FIRST YEAR SIXTH")

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that brings
health can
never be
ill-spent
John Webster
1638

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PILLS
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Obtainable everywhere

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SUNNY furnished room overlooking garden. Elec. cooker and fire. Primrose 4628.

MRS. J. B. PRIESTLEY requires urgently house in country easily accessible main line, preferably between Worcester and London. Seven bedrooms minimum, furnished or unfurnished; good kitchen garden, old gardener. Available help for rough housework essential; if furnished we have no dogs but lively school children holidays. Write fully, giving details water, sanitation, cooking arrangements, to Broxwood Court Hostel, Leominster.

Where to Stay

ASK for descriptive list (4*d.* post free) of 165 INNS and HOTELS managed by the P.R.H.A. LTD., 193 Regent Street, W.1.

LOVELY Cotswolds. Charming old house in peaceful sheltered valley. Sunny aspect. Ideal for restful holiday from war work. Own produce. Break. in bed. Beaut. walks. Terms from 3½ *gns.* FINLAYSON, Slad, near Stroud.

"A MODEL Hotel in Miniature," *vide* Press. 1 hr. London. Delightful location. Unusual comf. Warmth. Old-world charm. Farm and gard. prod. Golf, riding, lovely walks. CHEQUERS, Pulborough, W. Sussex. Tel. 86.

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FINE g. f. rm. furn., coal or gas, 35*s.*–37*s.* 6*d.* 22 Belsize Ave., N.W.3. PRI 1043.

CHEERFUL, frdly. women wtd. sh. com. cntry. cot., suit mother and yng. child. JOHNSON, Coldharbour, Warninglid, Haywards Heath.

WANTED, unfurn. self-cont. studio or 2 rms. and bath, garden. Access cen. London. Also unfurn. cottage country nr. London. Box M14.

YOUNG married woman wishes share her pleasant flat. Central. Wes. 1302. Evenings.

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Name ....

Address..

Company Meeting

LOYDS BANK LIMITED

THE annual general meeting of Lloyds Bank imited will be held on 29th January, 1943, at 71 mbard Street, London, E.C.

In his address, already circulated to members, rd Wardington states:

Our deposits have reached further records by their rease of £65,000,000 during the twelve months, hile our Advances have decreased by £8,000,000. u will notice also an increase in our Investments of 0,500,000, in our Treasury Deposit Receipts of 4,500,000, and in our Treasury Bills of £14,000,000. hus, after allowing for an increase of £7,500,000 in ms in Transit and Cheques in course of collection, e whole of our fresh deposits have been loaned to e Government.

PROFITS

Our net profit of £1,364,081 is an increase of 9,882 compared with 1941, but is less than it was 1940, and still less than in 1939. As I have already inted out, the whole of our additional deposits s been invested in Government securities, yielding an average, after allowance has been made for 10 r cent. held in cash, only 1¾ per cent. On the other nd, there is additional interest to our customers these extra deposits to be allowed for, and the duction of advances lessens our interest earnings, hile heavier payments to our Staff, due to the grant-aid and to the more recent special bonus, and to e fact that many more members have been called and are still having their pay made up to their mer salary, with the added burden of the salaries the new Staff, account for a further increase in our penses.

It may be of interest to members to see at a glance w our profit has been allocated. Out of every pound rned by the Bank in 1942,

3s. 2d.	went by way of interest to our Current, Deposit and Savings Bank customers,
8s. 9d.	went to Salaries, Pensions and Staff Funds, leaving a balance of only
8s. 1d.	to cover all other Expenses, Provision for Bad Debts, Income Tax, Dividend and Allocations.

It only remains for me to add that out of our ailable balance of £1,892,705 we have placed 100,000 to our general Contingencies Account and t aside £350,000 to a separate War Contingencies und. It is obvious that in the transition from war peace the Bank will be faced with a number of ecial non-recurring items of expenditure, for which will be wise to make some provision. I need only stance, as an example, deferred repairs and upkeep our premises. There will be, undoubtedly, a somehat heavy bill to meet in this connection as soon as rtime restrictions are removed. After making ese two allocations, there remains a balance which ables us to recommend the payment of our usual vidend and carry forward the sum of £524,745.

I feel sure that the bonus to the Staff, approved ter the most friendly and frank discussions with the presentatives of our Staff Association, will be gladly dorsed by our members. The Staff have been rking under considerable difficulties.

You will have been interested during the year to e the appointment of the Kennet Committee, with e duty committed to them of enquiring as to the rese of man power from banking and allied businesses. nks gave full evidence on the subject, and were xious to collaborate with the Committee as fully as ssible. You will have been pleased to learn from e Report of the Committee that they paid tribute the helpful part played by the banks. In the case our own bank we have released 5,003 men and men of the permanent staff, and have closed 424 anches and sub-branches. Quite apart from the mbers mentioned above, we have engaged 13,000 mporary staff since the commencement of the war, 000 of whom have left our service to join the armed rces or to take up other war work.

Our pre-war number of clerical male staff (excluding r special Army Agency Branch at Pall Mall) was ,077, and of those there are only 4,600 left in the nk of whom nearly 200 are awaiting call up to the rces.

Company Meeting

WESTMINSTER BANK LIMITED

HON. RUPERT E. BECKETT'S STATEMENT

THE annual ordinary general meeting of the Westminster Bank Ltd. will be held on January 27th in London.

The following is a summary of the statement of the Hon. Rupert E. Beckett (the chairman), which has been circulated to shareholders: The Directors had decided to recommend to shareholders that the £1 fully-paid shares be converted into stock, and an Extraordinary General Meeting for this purpose would therefore be held on February 10th next.

The accounts for the past year showed that the profit earned was £1,237,585, and exceeded that of 1941 by some £47,000. This result had been due to the expansion in deposits, which at the date of the balance sheet had risen by £31 millions during the year. The item Advances to Customers had decreased by just over £7 millions on the year, which meant that the most profitable outlet for the Bank's funds had again sensibly diminished. As the Premises Account now stood at less than £5 millions, it was not this year considered necessary to allocate a sum to reduce still further the capital value of Premises, but £200,000 had been allocated to a fund which had been set up for reinstatement and rebuilding and for deferred repairs which could not be undertaken now, but which would be necessary after the war.

Mr. Beckett then drew shareholders' attention specially to the finding of the Kennet Committee "that in all the industries under review employers and employees alike have consistently demonstrated the greatest willingness to perform all that is required in the national emergency." Although the banks had received this measure of commendation from this authoritative body, in Parliament, in certain sections of the Press, and in speeches of exalted Clerics, a spirit of criticism, even of resentment, of the banks had been frequently manifested.

It was common knowledge, he said, that one section of political thought would welcome the disappearance of banks as independent institutions altogether and turn them into mere appanages of the State. He had never learned what advantages were supposed to accrue from nationalisation of the banks, and did not consider that it would make State banking easier, more accommodating, more efficient or cheaper than present-day banking.

As for those who urged that banking had become a monopoly, there were to-day eight large banks and a considerable number of smaller ones directly competing with each other for business, and, in addition, the Post Office and other savings banks, building societies, etc. Surely a monopoly could command its own terms of business, but he had yet to hear of any British bank able to act in such a dictatorial fashion.

There were those who said that the banks were paid too highly for their services in connection with the newly-created credit, whose basis was Government paper; it was "costless credit," and the banks should either not be remunerated at all for their handling of it, or existing interest rates should be reduced. In fact, credit created by Government operations came back to the banks in the form of new deposits, and whether placed on current account or deposit account the banks had to pay either in interest or in services. The phenomenon of "costless credit" for them simply did not exist. The various Government securities held as assets by the banks earned interest ranging from 1 per cent. for short-term to 3 per cent. for long-term. The Government, and not the banks, was naturally the arbiter of the rates paid.

The net profits of the banks were indeed appreciably lower than they were in pre-war years, notwithstanding the fact that they were handling a much greater volume of deposits; no charge of excessive war-time banking profits could be sustained.

Sound banking, Mr. Beckett remarked, precluded bankers from stating what they would or would not do in the post-war situation, but the banks could be relied upon to face new conditions in a spirit of enterprise, progress and helpfulness to the community.

Company Meeting

MIDLAND BANK LTD.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

THE RIGHT HON. R. McKENNA

INSTEAD of delivering a speech at the annual meeting of shareholders to be held on January 28th, 1943, the Chairman has prepared a statement, extracts from which appear below.

A year ago it was evident that we had to face the prospect of additional calls upon us for recruitment to the Forces. The Kennet Committee appointed to inquire into the possibility of further reduction in bank staffs has recognised that the banks have not been slow to adjust themselves to the higher demands of the fighting services. From this bank alone over 7,000 have joined the Forces, and of these nearly 6,000 were on the permanent staff. The loss in personnel has not been fully made up; before the war the total staff numbered about 14,000, whereas the comparable figure to-day is 12,300. A further reduction, making in all 15 per cent. from the pre-war total, is to be brought about in the near future. Subject to the maintenance of essential services we are examining every possibility of saving labour.

THE BANKS AS A LABOUR-SAVING DEVICE

It is not always recognised that the banks are in essence a labour-saving device, with the added advantage of guaranteeing security. The old notion that they existed to provide a luxury service for the rich man should have been buried long ago. A recent striking example of labour saving is provided by the new service undertaken by the banks under the clothes rationing scheme. Beyond the retail stage, all transfers of coupons and documents representing coupons are made through the banks; we ourselves have about 17,000 traders' coupon accounts and deal with fifteen to twenty million coupons a week, apart from the transfer vouchers to which they give rise. The coupons themselves, once they have been counted by the retailer, paid into the bank and credited to his "coupon account," have served their purpose, and from that point all the retailer or the wholesaler need do is to draw "cheques" on his coupon account as he may require to replenish stocks. The banks undertake the necessary book-keeping entries and ensure that traders do not exceed what may be called their "coupon purchasing-power."

Compare the simplicity of this procedure with what would be involved if no such arrangement were in operation. After the retailer had counted the coupons handed over by customers he would have to take care of them on his own premises; he would then have to count out numbers appropriate to his demands upon various suppliers, and dispatch them with due precautions against loss in transit. The wholesaler would similarly have to count out the coupons he received, provide for safe custody, and again count out odd thousands and hundreds and tens and ones according to his requirements from other wholesalers or manufacturers.

The device, however new in this form, is really the same as that used in conducting the money side of the nation's business. Substitute currency notes and coin for coupons and the analogy is complete, though the volume is on a vastly larger scale. The great bulk of the counting and recounting of odd amounts of paper currency and coin is dispensed with, and all risk to the owner in storing and dispatching currency is avoided. An enormous volume of work spread over millions of customers and covering an annual turnover of tens of thousands of millions of pounds is rendered unnecessary by the banking machinery and the use of cheques. At a time when man-power is the most vital of all requirements, this economy of mass operation becomes of first-rate importance in the national effort. The banks are rightly regarded as performing an essential service, indispensable in carrying on the nation's business in war as in peace; but they can operate successfully only under the condition that they have the highly experienced staff required for working with speed and complete accuracy.